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V. J. Kirtikar
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BEHIND THE BUNGALOW.

VASUDEV J. KIRTIKAR
MALABAR HILL
BOMBAY

BY EHA,

AUTHOR OF "THE TRIBES ON MY FRONTIER."

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BY THE ILLUSTRATOR OF "THE TRIBES ON MY FRONTIER."

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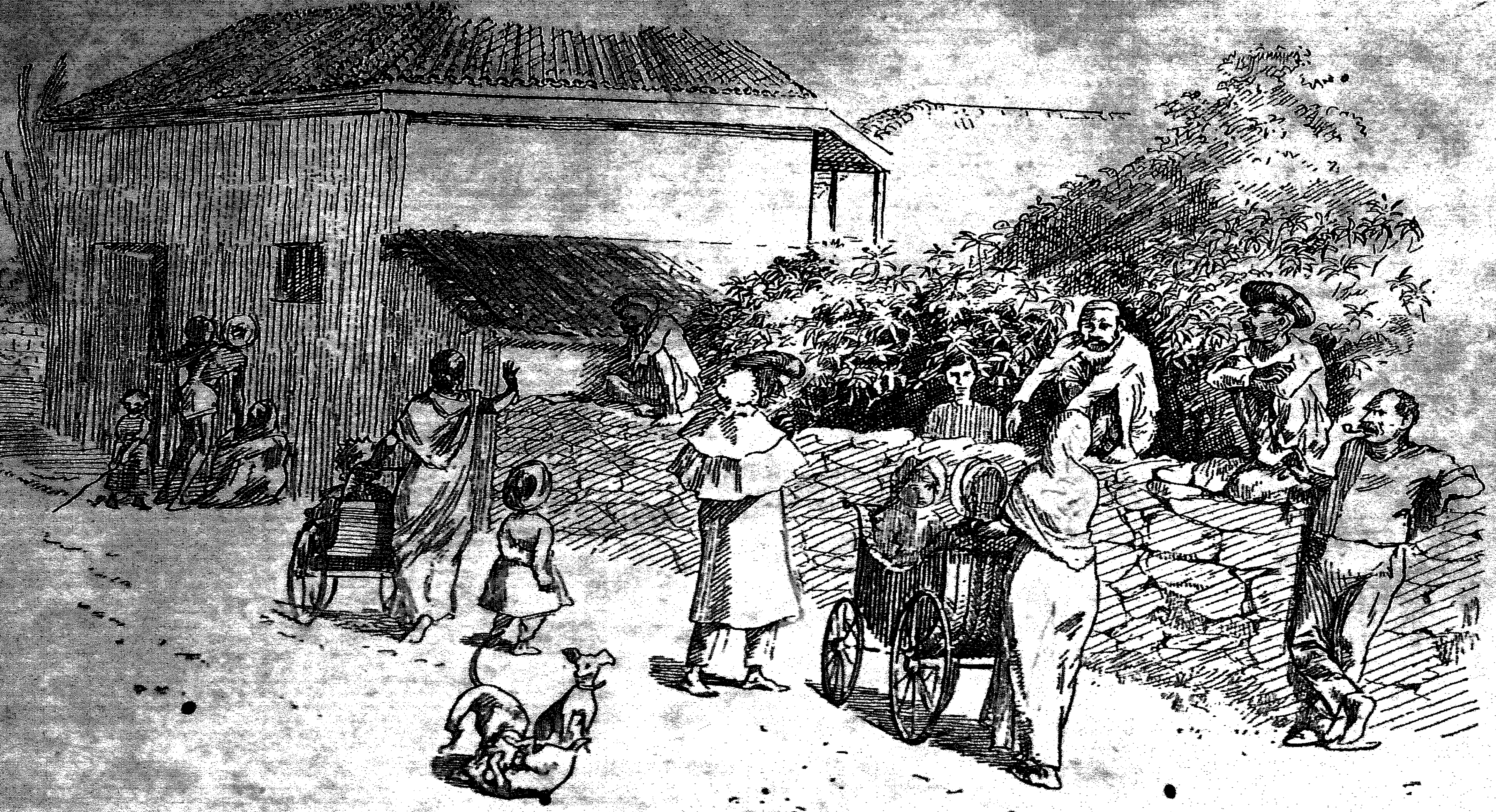

Frontispiece.

"BEHIND THE BUNGALOW."

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PREFACE.

THESE papers appeared in the *Times of India*, and were written, of course, for the Bombay Presidency; but the Indian *Nowker* exhibits very much the same traits wherever he is found and under whatsoever name.

EHA.

M. R. JAYAKAR
MALABAR HILL
BOMBAY

R. JAYAKAR
MALABAR HILL
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M. R. JAYAKAR
MALABAR HILL
BOMBAY

BEHIND THE BUNGALOW.

ENGAGING A BOY.

EXTENDED, six feet of me, over an ample easy-chair, in absolute repose of mind and body, soothed with a cup of tea which Canjee had ministered to me, comforted by the slippers which he had put on my feet in place of a heavy pair of boots which he had unlaced and taken away, feeling in charity with all mankind —from this standpoint I began to contemplate "The Boy."

What a wonderful provision of nature he is in this half-

hatched civilization of ours, which merely distracts our energies by multiplying our needs and leaves us no better off than we were before we discovered them! He seems to have a natural aptitude for discerning, or even inventing, your wants and supplies them before you yourself are aware of them. While in his hands nothing petty invades you. Great-mindedness becomes possible. "Magnanimus Æneas" must have had an excellent Boy. What is the history of the Boy? How and where did he originate? What is the derivation of his name? I have heard it traced to the Hindoostanee word *bhai*, a brother, but the usual attitude of the Anglo-Indian's mind towards his domestics does not give sufficient support to this. I incline to the belief that the word is of hybrid origin, having its roots in *bhoee*, a bearer, and drawing the tenderer shades of its meaning from the English word which it resembles. To this no doubt may be traced in part the master's disposition to regard his boy always as *in statu pupillari*. Perhaps he carries this view of the relationship too far, but the Boy, on the other hand, cheerfully regards him as *in loco parentis* and accepts much from him which he will not endure from a stranger. A cuff from his master (delivered in a right spirit) raises his dignity, but the same from a guest in the house wounds him terribly. He protests that it is "not regulation." And in this happy spirit of filial piety he will live until his hair grows white and his hand

shaky and his teeth fall out and service gives place to worship, *dulia* to *latria*, and the most revered idol among his *penates* is the photograph of his departed master. With a tear in his dim old eye he takes it from its shrine and unwraps the red handkerchief in which it is folded, while he tells of the virtues of the great and good man. He says there are no such masters in these days, and when you reply that there are no such servants either, he does not contradict you. Yet he may have been a sad young scamp when he began life as a dog-boy fifty-five years ago, and, on the other hand, it is not so impossible as it seems that the scapegrace for whose special behoof you keep a rattan on your hat-pegs may mellow into a most respectable and trustworthy old man, at least if he is happy enough to settle under a good master; for the Boy is often very much a reflection of the master. Often, but not always. Something depends on the grain of the material. There are Boys and Boys. There is a Boy with whom, when you get him, you can do nothing but dismiss him, and this is not a loss to him only, but to you, for every dismissal weakens your position. A man who parts lightly with his servants will never have a servant worth retaining. At the morning conference in the market, where masters are discussed over the soothing *beeree*, none holds so low a place as the *saheb* who has had eleven butlers in twelve months. Only loafers will take service with him,

and he must pay even them highly. Believe me, the reputation that your service is permanent, like service under the *Sircar*, is worth many rupees a month in India.

The engagement of a first Boy, therefore, is a momentous crisis, fraught with fat contentment and a good digestion, or with unrest, distraction, bad temper, and a ruined constitution. But, unfortunately, we approach this epoch in a condition of original ignorance. There is not even any guide or handbook of Boys which we may consult. The Griffin a week old has to decide for himself between not a dozen specimens, but a dozen types, all strange, and each differing from the other in dress, complexion, manner, and even language. As soon as it becomes known that the new *sahcb* from England is in need of a Boy, the *levée* begins. First you are waited upon by a personage of imposing appearance. His broad and dignified face is ornamented with grey, well-trimmed whiskers. There is no lack of gold thread on his turban, an ample *cumberbund* envelopes his portly figure, and he wears canvas shoes. He left his walking-cane at the door. His testimonials are unexceptionable, mostly signed by mess secretaries; and he talks familiarly, in good English, of Members of Council. Everything is most satisfactory, and you inquire, timidly, what salary he would expect. He replies that that rests with your lordship: in his last appointment he had Rs. 35 a month, and a pony to ride to market. The

situation is now very embarrassing. It is not only that you feel you are in the presence of a greater man than yourself, but that you know *he* feels it. By far the best way out of the difficulty is to accept your relative position, and tell him blandly that when you are a commissioner *saheb,* or a commander-in-chief, he shall be your head butler. He will understand you, and retire with a polite assurance that that day is not far distant.

As soon as the result of this interview becomes known, a man of very black complexion offers his services. He has no shoes or *cumberbund,* but his coat is spotlessly white. His certificates are excellent, but signed by persons whom you have not met or heard of. They all speak of him as very hard-working and some say he is honest. His spotless dress will prepossess you if you do not understand it. Its real significance is that he had to go to the *dhobie* to fit himself for coming into your presence. This man's expectations as regards salary are most modest, and you are in much danger of engaging him, unless the hotel butler takes an opportunity of warning you earnestly that, "This man not gentlyman's servant, sir! He sojer's servant!" In truth, we occupy in India a double social position; that which belongs to us among our friends, and that which belongs to us in the market, in the hotel, or at the dinner table, by virtue of our servants. The former concerns our pride, but the latter concerns our comfort. Please your-

self, therefore, in the choice of your personal friends and companions, but as regards your servants keep up your standard.

The next who offers himself will probably be of the Goanese variety. He comes in a black coat, with continuations of checked jail cloth, and takes his hat off just before he enters the gate. He is said to be a Colonel in the Goa Militia, but it is impossible to guess his rank, as he always wears *mufti* in Bombay. He calls himself plain Mr. Querobino Floriano de Braganza. His testimonials are excellent; several of them say that he is a good tailor, which, to a bachelor, is a recommendation; and his expectations as regards his stipend are not immoderate. The only suspicious thing is that his services have been dispensed with on several occasions very suddenly without apparent reason. He sheds no light on this circumstance when you question him, but closer scrutiny of his certificates will reveal the fact that the convivial season of Christmas has a certain fatality for him.

When he retires, you may have a call from a fine looking old follower of the Prophet. He is dressed in spotless white, with a white turban and white *cumberbund;* his beard would be as white as either if he had not dyed it rich orange. He also has lost his place very suddenly more than once, and on the last occasion without a certificate. When you ask him the cause of this, he explains, with a certain brief dignity, in good Hindoostanee, that there was some *tukrar* (disagreement) be-

tween him and one of the other servants, in which his master took the part of the other, and as his *abroo* (honour) was concerned, he resigned. He does not tell you that the *tukrar* in question culminated in his pursuing the cook round the compound with a carving-knife in his hand, after which he burst into the presence of the lady of the house, gesticulating with the same weapon, and informed her, in a heated manner, that he was quite prepared to cut the throats of all the servants, if honour required it.

If none of the preceding please you, you shall have several varieties of the Soortee tribe anxious to take service with you; nice looking, clean men, with fair complexions. There will be the inevitable unfortunate whose house was burned to ashes two months ago, on which occasion he lost everything he had, including, of course, all his valuable certificates. Another will send in a budget dating from the troubled times of the mutiny. From them it will appear that he has served in almost every capacity and can turn his hand to anything, is especially good with children, cooks well, and knows English thoroughly, having been twice to England with his master. When this desirable man is summoned into your presence, you cannot help being startled to find how lightly age sits upon him; he looks like twenty-five. As for his knowledge of English, it must be latent, for he always falls back upon his own vernacular for purposes of conversation. You rashly

charge him with having stolen his certificates, but he indignantly repels the insinuation. You find a discrepancy, however, in the name and press him still further, whereupon he retires from his first position to the extent of admitting that the papers, though rightfully his, were earned by his father. He does not seem to think this detracts much from their value. Others will come, with less pronounced characteristics, and, therefore, more perplexing. The Madrassee will be there, with his spherical turban and his wonderful command of colloquial English; he is supposed to know how to prepare that mysterious luxury, "real Madras curry." Bengal servants are not common in Bombay, fortunately, for they would only add to the perplexity. The larger the series of specimens which you examine, the more difficult it becomes to decide to which of them all you should commit your happiness. "Characters" are a snare, for the master when parting with his Boy too often pays off arrears of charity in his certificate; and besides, the prudent Boy always has his papers read to him and eliminates anything detrimental to his interests. But there must be marks by which, if you were to study them closely, you might distinguish the occult qualities of Boys and divide them into genera and orders. The subject only wants its Linnæus. If ever I gird myself for my *magnum opus*, I am determined it shall be a "Compendious Guide to the Classification of Indian Boys."

M. R. JAYAKAR. MALABAR HILL BOMBAY

THE BOY AT HOME.

OUR BOY is your *valet de chambre*, your butler, your tailor, your steward and general agent, your interpreter, or oriental translator and your treasurer. On assuming charge of his duties he takes steps first, in an unobtrusive way, to ascertain the amount of your income, both that he may know the measure of his dignity, and also that he may be able to form an estimate of what you ought to spend. This is a matter with which he feels he is officially concerned. Indeed, the arrangement which accords best with his own

are too minute to allow of much retrenchment. You can scarcely make sweeping reductions on such charges as:—"Butons for master's trouser, 9 pies;" "Tramwei for going to market," 1 anna 6 pies;" "Grain to sparrow" (canary seed!) "1 anna 3 pies;" "Making white to master's hat, 5 pies." And when at last you find a charge big enough to lay hold of, the imperturbable man proceeds to explain how, in the case of that particular item, he was able, by the exercise of a little forethought, to save you 2 annas and 3 pies. I have struggled against these accounts and know them. It is vain to be indignant. You must just pay the bill, and if you do not want another, you must make up your mind to be your own treasurer. You will fall in your Boy's estimation, but it does not follow that he will leave your service. The notion that every native servant makes a principle of saving the whole of his wages and remitting them monthly to Goa, or Nowsaree, is one of the ancient myths of Anglo-India. I do not mean to say that if you encourage your Boy to do this he will refuse; on the contrary, he likes it. But the ordinary Boy, I believe, is not a prey to ambition and, if he can find service to his mind, easily reconciles himself to living on his wages, or, as he terms it, in the practical spirit of oriental imagery, "eating" them. The conditions he values seem to be,—permanence, respectful treatment, immunity from kicks and cuffs and from abuse, especially in his own tongue, and,

above all, a quiet life, without *kitkit*, which may be vulgarly translated, nagging. He considers his situation with regard to these conditions, he considers also his pay and prospect of unjust emoluments, with a judicial mind he balances the one against the other, and if he works patiently on, it is because the balance is in his favour. I am satisfied that it is an axiom of domestic economy in India that the treatment which you mete out to your Boy has a definite money value. Ill-usage of him is a luxury like any other, paid for by those who enjoy it, not to be had otherwise.

There is one other thing on which he sets his childish heart. He likes service with a master who is in some sort a *burra saheb*. He is by nature a hero worshipper — and master is his natural hero. The saying, that no man is a hero to his own valet, has no application here. In India, if you are not a hero to your own Boy, I should say, without wishing to be unpleasant, that the probabilities are against your being a hero to anybody. It is very difficult for us, with our notions, to enter into the Boy's beautiful idea of the relationship which subsists between him and master. To get at it at all we must realize that no shade of radicalism has ever crossed his social theory. "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity" is a monstrous conception, to which he would not open his mind if he could. He sees that the world contains masters and servants, and doubts not that the

former were provided for the accommodation of the latter. His fate having made him a servant, his master is the foundation on which he stands. Everything, therefore, which relates to the well-being, and especially to the reputation, of his master, is a personal concern of his own. *Per contra*, he does not forget that he is the ornament of his master. I had a Boy once whom I retained chiefly as a curiosity, for I believe he had the smallest adult human head in heathendom. He appeared before me one day with that minute organ surmounted by a gorgeous turban of purple and gold, which he informed me had cost about a month's pay. Now I knew that his brain was never equal to the management of his own affairs, so that he was always in pecuniary straits, but he anticipated my curiosity by informing me that he had raised the necessary funds by pawning his wife's bangles. Unthinkingly I reproached him, and then I saw, coming over his countenance, the bitter expression of one who has met with rebuff when he looked for sympathy. Arranging himself in his proudest attitude, he exclaimed, "Saheb, is it not for your glory? When strangers see me will they not ask, 'Whose servant is that?'" Living always under the influence of this spirit, the Boy never loses an opportunity of enforcing your importance, and his own as your representative. When you are staying with friends, he gives the butler notice of your tastes. If tea is made for breakfast, he demands coffee

or cocoa; if jam is opened, he will try to insist upon marmalade. At an hotel he orders special dishes. When you buy a horse or a carriage, he discovers defects in it, and is gratified if he can persuade you to return it and let people see that you are not to be imposed upon or trifled with. He delights to keep creditors and mean men waiting at the door until it shall be your pleasure to see them. But it is only justice to say that it will be your own fault if this disposition is not tempered with something of a purer feeling, a kind of filial regard and even reverence—if reverence is at all possible—under the influence of which he will take a kindly interest in your health and comfort. When your wife is away, he seems to feel a special responsibility, and my friend's Boy, when warning his master against an unwholesome luxury, would enforce his words with the gentle admonition, "Missis never allowing, sir.".

It is this way of regarding himself and his master which makes the Boy generally such a faithful servant; but he often has a sort of spurious conscience, too, growing out of the fond pride with which he cherishes his good name, so that you do not strain the truth to say that he is strictly honest. Veracity is the point on which he is weakest, but even in this there are exceptions. My last Boy was curiously scrupulous about the truth, and would rarely tell a lie, even to shield himself from blame, though he would do so to get the *hamal* into a scrape

I regret to say that the Boy has flaws. His memory is a miracle; but just once in a way, when you are dining at the club, he lays out your clothes nicely without a collar. He sends you off on an excursion to Matheran, and packs your box in his neat way; but instead of putting one complete sleeping suit, he puts in the upper parts of two, without the nether and more necessary portions. It is irritating to discover, when you are dressing in a hurry, that he has put your studs into the upper flap of your shirt front; but I am not sure it does not try your patience more to find out, as you brush your teeth, that he has replenished your tooth-powder box from a bottle of Gregory's mixture. But Dhobie day is his opportunity. He first delivers the soiled clothes by tale, diving into each pocket to see if you have left rupees in it; but he sends a set of studs to be washed. Then he sits down to execute repairs. He has an assorted packet of metal and cotton buttons beside him, from which he takes at random. He finishes with your socks, which he skilfully darns with white thread, and contemplates the piebald effect with much satisfaction; after which he puts them up in little balls, each containing a pair of different colours. Finally he will arrange all the clean clothes in the drawer on a principle of his own, the effect of which will find its final development in your temper when you go in haste for a handkerchief I suspect there is often an explanation of these things which

we do not think of. The poor Boy has other things on his mind besides your clothes. He has a wife, or two, and children, and they are not with him. His child sickens and dies, or his wife runs away with someone else, and carries off all the jewellery in which he invested his savings; but he goes about his work in silence, and we only remark that he has been unusually stupid the last few days.

So much for the Boy in general. As for your own particular Boy, he must be a very exceptional specimen if he has not persuaded you long since that, though Boys in general are a rascally lot, you have been singularly fortunate in yours.

TO MATHERAN!

THE DOG-BOY.

In Bombay it is not enough to fit yourself with a Boy: your dog requires a Boy too. I have always felt an interest in the smart little race of Bombay dog-boys. As a corps, they go on with little change from year to year, but individually they are of short duration, and the question naturally arises, What becomes of them all when they outgrow their dog-boyhood? From such observations as I have been able to make, I believe the dog-boy is not a

species by himself, but represents the early, or larva, stage of several varieties of domestic servants. The clean little man, in neat print jacket and red velveteen cap, is the young of a butler; while another, whom nothing can induce to keep himself clean, would probably, if you reared him, turn into a *ghorawalla*. There are others, in appearance intermediate, who are the offspring of *hamals* and *mussals*. These at a later stage become *coolies*, going to market in the morning, fetching ice and soda-water, and so on, until they mature into *hamals* and *mussals* themselves. Like all larvæ, dog-boys eat voraciously and grow rapidly. You engage a little fellow about a cubit high, and for a time he does not seem to change at all; then one morning you notice that his legs have come out half a yard or more from his pantaloons, and soon your bright little page is a gawky, long-limbed lout, who comes to ask for leave that he may go to his country and get married. If you do not give it he will take it, and no doubt you are well rid of him, for the intellect in these people ripens about the age of fourteen or fifteen, and after that the faculty of learning anything new stops, and general intelligence declines. At any rate, when once your boy begins to grow long and weedy, his days as a dog-boy are ended. He will pass through a chrysalis stage in his country, or somewhere else, and after a time emerge in his mature form, in which he will still remember you, and *salaam* to you when he meets you on

the road. If he left your service in disgrace, he is so much the more punctilious in observing this ceremony, which is not an expression of gratitude, but merely an assertion of his right to public recognition at your hands, as one who had the honour of eating your salt. I am certain an Oriental *salaam* is essentially a claim rather than a tribute. For this reason your peons, as they stand in line to receive you at your office door, are very careful not to *salaam* all at once, lest you might think one promiscuous recognition sufficient for all. The havildar, or naik, as is his right, salutes first, and then the rest follow with sufficient interval to allow you to recognise each one separately. I have met some men with such lordly souls that they would not condescend to acknowledge the salutations of menials; but you gain nothing by this kind of pride in India. They only conclude that you are not an *asl*, or born, *saheb,* and rejoice that at any rate you cannot take away their right to do obeisance to you. And you cannot. Your very *bhunghie* does you a pompous salutation in public places, and you have no redress.

The dog-boy's primary duties are to feed, tend and wash his charge, and to take it for a walk morning and evening; but he is active and very acute, and many other duties fall naturally to him. It seems hard that he should come under the yoke so early, but we must not approach such subjects with Western ideas. The exuberant spirits of boyhood are

not indigenous to this country, and the dog-boy has none of them. He never does mischief for mischief's sake; he robs no bird's nest; he feels no impulse to trifle with the policeman. Marbles are his principal pastime. He puts the thumb of his left hand to the ground and discharges his taw from the point of his second finger, bending it back till it touches the back of the hand and then letting it off like a steel spring. Then he follows up on all fours, with the action of a monsoon frog in pursuit of a fugitive ant. But liberty and the pride of an independent position amply compensate any high-souled dog-boy for the loss of his few amusements.

I have said that the dog-boy never does mischief for its own sake. He would as soon do his duty for its own sake. The motive is not sufficient. You shall not find him refusing to do any mischief which tends to his own advantage. I grieve to say it, for I have leanings towards the dog-boy, but there is in him a vein of unsophisticated depravity, which issues from the rock of his nature like a clear spring that no stirrings of conscience or shame have rendered turbid. His face, it is simple and childlike, and he has the most innocent eye, but he tells any lie which the occasion demands with a freedom from embarrassment which at a later age will be impossible to him. He stands his ground, too, under any fire of cross-examination. The rattan would dislodge him, but unfortunately his guileless countenance too often shields him

from this searching and wholesome instrument. When he is sent for a hack buggy and returns after half-an-hour, with a perplexed face, saying that there is not one to be had anywhere, who would suspect that he has been holding an auction at the nearest stand, dwelling on the liberality and wealth of his master and the distance to which his business that morning will take him, and that, when he found no one would bid up to his reserve, he remained firm and came away.

Perhaps I seem hard on the dog-boy, but my experience has not been a happy one. My first seemed to be an average specimen, moderately clean and well-behaved; but he was not satisfied with his wages. He assured me that they did not suffice to fill his stomach. I told him that I thought it would be his father's duty for some years yet to feed and clothe him, but his young face grew very sad and he answered softly, "I have no father." So I took pity on him and raised his pay, at the same time assuring him that, if he behaved himself, I would take care of him. His principal duty was to take the faithful Hubshee for a walk morning and evening, and when he returned he would tell me where he had gone and how he had avoided consorting with other dog-boys and their dogs. When matters had gone on in this satisfactory way for some time, I happened to take an unusual walk one evening, and I came suddenly on a company of very lively little boys engaged in a most exciting game. Their shouts

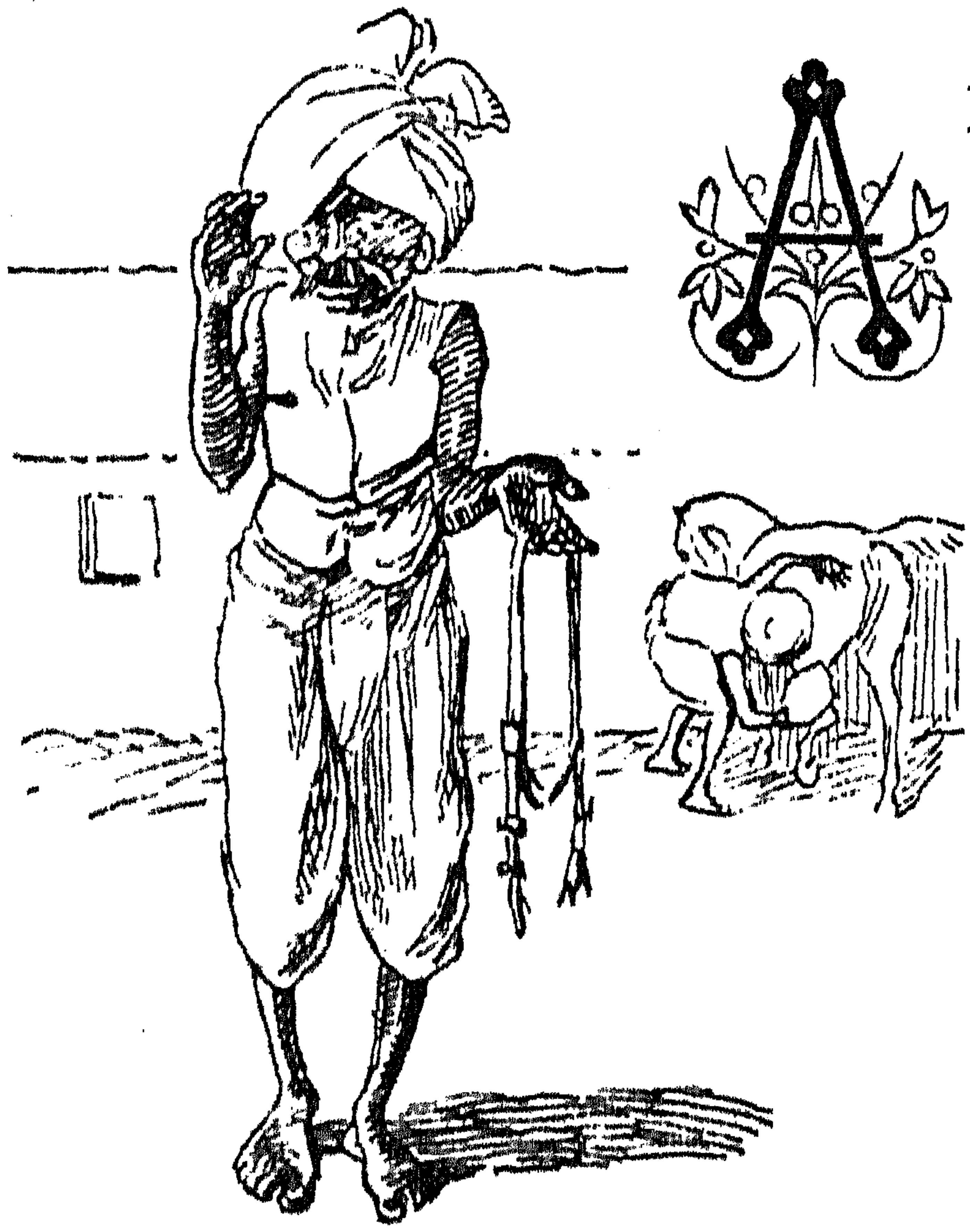
In fact I felt that, æsthetically, he raised the tone of my house. He was hardworking, too, and would do anything he was told, so that I seemed to have nothing to wish for now but that he might not grow old too soon. But, alas! I started on an excursion one night, leaving him in charge of my birds. He promised to attend to them faithfully, and having seen me off, started on an excursion of his own, from which he did not get back till three o'clock next day. I arrived at the same moment and he saw me. Quick as thought he raced upstairs, flung the windows open and began to pull the covers off the bird-cages; but I came in before the operation could be finished. In the interests of common morality I thought it best to eject him from the premises before he had time to frame a lie. About a week after this I received a petition, signed with his mark, recounting his faithful services, expressing his surprise and regret at the sudden and unprovoked manner in which I had dismissed him, and insinuating that some enemy or rival had poisoned my benevolent mind against him. He concluded by demanding satisfaction. I wonder what has become of him since.

I have said that there is a vein of depravity in the dog-boy, but there must be a compensating vein of worth of some kind, an Ormuzd which in the end often triumphs over Ahriman. The influences among which he developes do little for him. At home he is certainly subject to a certain rugged

discipline; his mother throws stones at him when she is angry, and his father, when he can catch him, gives him a cudgeling to be remembered. But when he leaves the parental roof he passes from all this and is left to himself. Some masters treat him in a parental spirit and chastise him when he deserves it, and the Boy tyrannizes over him and twists his ear, but on the whole he grows as a tree grows. And yet how often he matures into a most respectable and trustworthy man!

DOG-BOYS.

THE GHORAWALLA, OR SYCE.



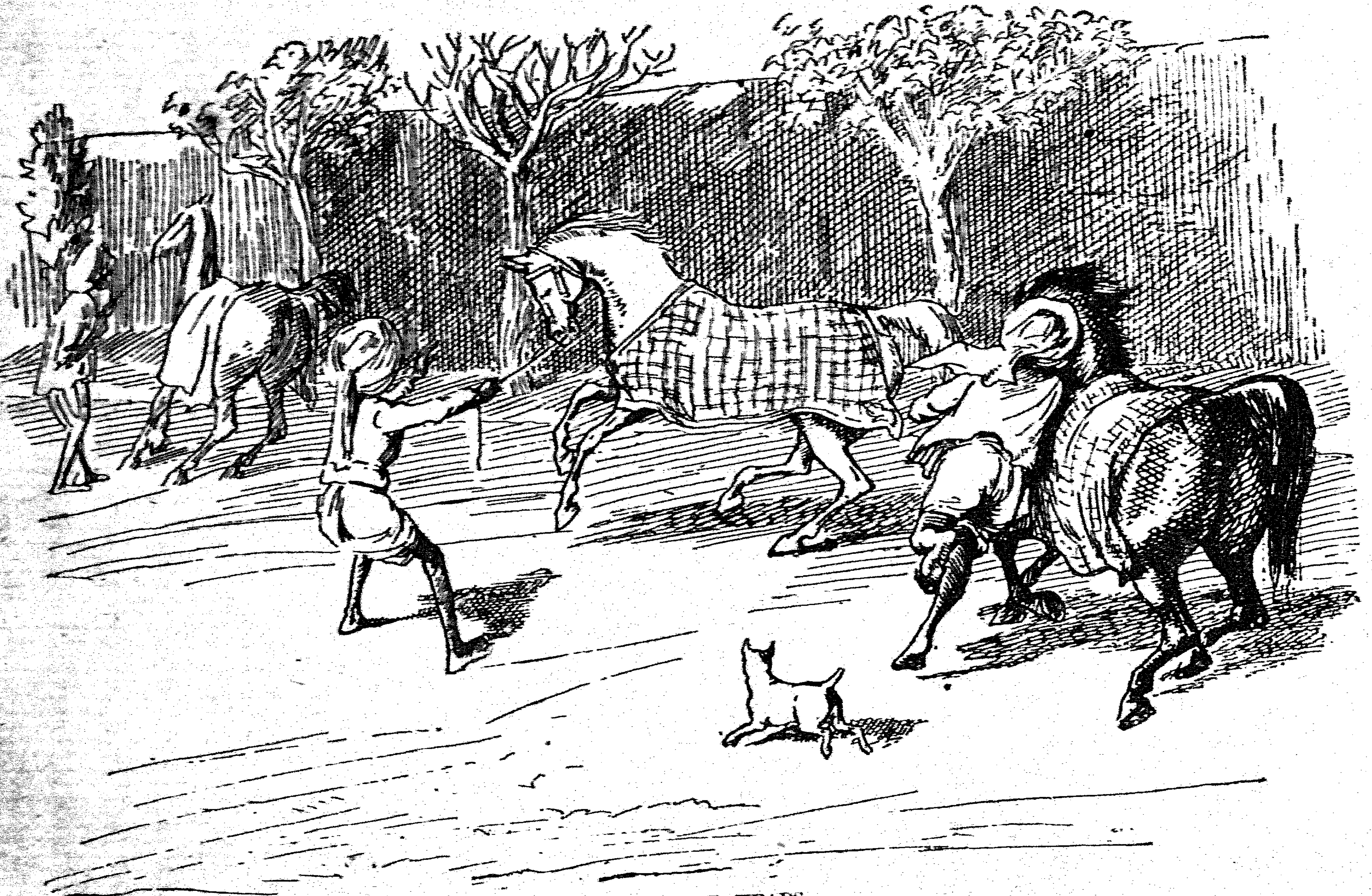
A BOY for yourself, a boy for your dog, then a man for your horse; that is the usual order of trouble. Of course the horse itself precedes the horse-keeper, but then I do not reckon the buying of a horse among life's troubles, rather among its luxuries. It combines all the subtle pleasures of shopping with a turbid excitement which is its own. From the moment when you first start from the breakfast-table at the sound of hoofs, and find the noble animal at the door, arching his neck and champing his bit, as if he felt proud to bear that other animal, bandy-legged, mendacious, and altogether ignoble, who sits jauntily on his back, down to the moment when you walk round to the stable for a little quiet enjoyment of

the sense of ownership, there is a high tide of mental elation running through the days. Then the *Ghorawalla* supervenes.

The first symptom of him is an indent for certain articles which he asserts to be absolutely necessary before he can enter on his professional duties. These are a *jhule, baldee, tobra, mora, booroos, bagdoor, agadee, peechadee, curraree, hathalee,* &c. It is not very rational to be angry, for most of the articles, if not all, are really required. Several of them, indeed, are only ropes, for the *Ghorawalla,* or syce, as they call him on the other side of India, gives every bit of cordage about his beast a separate name, as a sailor describes the rigging of a ship. But the fact remains that there is something peculiarly irritating in this first indent. Perhaps one feels, after buying and paying for a whole horse, that he might in decency have been allowed to breathe before being asked to pay again. If this is it, the sooner the delusion is dissipated the better. You will never have respite from payments while an active-minded syce remains on your staff. You think you have fitted him out with everything the heart of syce can desire, and he goes away seemingly happy, and commences work at once, hissing like twenty biscobras as he throws himself against the horse, and works his arms from wrist to elbow into its ribs. It looks as if it would like to turn round and take a small piece out of his hinder parts with its teeth, but its nose is tied

up to the roof of the stable, and its hind feet are pulled out and tied to a peg behind it, so that it can only writhe and cultivate that amiable temper which characterizes so many horses in this country. And the syce is happy; but his happiness needs constant sustenance. Next morning he is at the door with a request for an anna to buy oil. Horses in this country cannot sleep without a night-light. They are afraid of rats, I suppose, like ladies. However, it is a small demand; all the syce's demands are small, so are mosquitoes. Next day he again wants an anna for oil, but this has nothing to do with the other. Yesterday's was one sort of oil for burning, this is another sort of oil for cleaning the bits. To-morrow he will require a third sort of oil for softening the leather nose-bag, and the oils of the country will not be exhausted then. Among the varied street-cries of Bombay, the "*I-scream*" man, the *tala-chavee-walla*, the *botlee-walla*, the vendors of greasy sweetmeats and *bawlee-sugah*, the legion of *borahs*, and that abominable little imp who issues from the newspaper offices, and walks the streets, yelling "Telleecram! tellee-c-r-a-a-m!" among them all there is one voice so penetrating, and so awakening where it penetrates, that—that I cannot find a fitting conclusion to this sentence. Who of us has not started at that shrill squeal of pain, "Nee-ee-ee-ttile!" The *Ghorawalla* watches for it, and stopping the good-natured woman, brings her in

and submits a request for a bottle of neat's foot oil, for want of which your harness is going to destruction. She has blacking as well as oil, but he will call her in for that afterwards. He never concludes two transactions in one day. When he has succeeded in reducing you to such a state of irritability that it is not safe to mention money in your presence, he stops at once and changes tactics. He brings the horse to the door with a thick layer of dust on the saddle and awaits your onset with the intrepid inquiry, "Can a saddle be kept clean without soap?" I suppose a time will come when he will have got every article he can possibly use, and it is natural to hope that he will then be obliged to leave you. But this also is a delusion. On the contrary, his resources only begin to develop themselves when he has got all he wants. First one of the leather things on the horse's hind feet gives way and has to be cobbled, then a rope wears out and must be replaced, then a buckle gets loose and wants a stitch. But his chief reliance is on the headstall and the nose-bag. When these have got well into use, one or other of them may be counted on to give way about every other day, and when nothing of the original article is left, the patches of which it is composed keep on giving way. Each repair costs from one to three pice, and it puzzles one to conceive what benefit a well-paid groom can derive from being the broker in such petty trans-



LOSING THEIR HEADS.

actions. But all the details of life in this country are microscopical, not only among the poor, but among those whose business is conducted in lakhs. I have been told of a certain well-known, wealthy mill-owner who, when a water Brahmin at a railway station had supplied him and all his attendants with drinking-water, was seen to fumble in his waistband, and reward the useful man with one copper pie. A pie at present rates of exchange is worth about $\frac{47}{128}$ of a farthing, and it is instructive to note that emergency, when it came, found this Crœsus provided with such a coin.

Now it is evident that if the syce can extort two pice from you for repairs and get the work done for five pies, one clear pie will adhere to his glutinous palm. I do not assert that this is what happens, for I know nothing about it. All I maintain is that there is no hypothesis which will satisfactorily explain all the facts, unless you admit the general principle that the syce derives advantage of some kind from the manipulation of the smallest copper coin. One notable phenomenon which this principle helps to explain is the syce's anxiety to have his horse shod on the due date every month. If the shoes are put on so atrociously that they stick for more than a month, I suspect he considers it professional to help them off.

Horses in this country are fed mostly on "gram," *cicer arietinum*, a kind of pea, which, when split, forms *dall*, and

can be made into a most nutritious and palatable curry. The *Ghorawalla* recognises this fact. If he is modest, you may be none the wiser, perhaps none the worse; but if he is not, then his horse will grow lean, while he grows stout. How to obviate this result is indeed the main problem which the syce presents, and many are the ways in vogue of trying to solve it. One way is to have the horse fed in your presence, you doing butler and watching him feed. Another is to play upon the caste feelings of the syce, defiling the horse's food in some way. I believe the editor of the *Aryan Trumpet* considers this a violation of the Queen's proclamation, and, in any case, it is a futile device. It may work with the haughty *Purdaisee*, but suppose your *Ghorawalla* is a *Mahar*, whose caste is a good way below that of his horse? I have nothing to do with any of these devices. I establish a compact with my man, the unwritten conditions of which are, that I pay him his wages, and supply a proper quantity of provender, while he, on his part, must see that his horse is always fat enough to work, and himself lean enough to run. If he cannot do this, I propose to find someone who can. Once he comes to a clear understanding of this treaty, and especially of its last clause, he will give little trouble. As some atonement for worrying you so much about the accoutrements, the *Ghorawalla* is very careful not to disturb you about the horse. If the saddle galls it, or its hoof cracks, he suppresses

the fact, and experiments upon the ailment with his own "vernacular medicines," as the Baboo called them. When these fail, and the case is almost past cure, he mentions it casually, as an unfortunate circumstance which has come to his notice. There are a few things, only a few, which make me feel homicidal, and this is one of them.

I cannot find the bright side of the syce: perhaps I am not in a humour to see it. Looking back down a long avenue of Gunnoos, Tookarams, Raghoos, Mahadoos and others whose names even have grown dim, I discern only a monotony of provocation. The fine figure of old Bindaram stands out as an exception, but then he was a coachman, and the coachman is to the *Ghorawalla* what cream is to skim milk. The unmitigated *Ghorawalla* is a sore disease, one of those forms of suffering which raise the question whether our modern civilization is anything but a great spider, spinning a web of wants and their accompanying worries over the world and entangling us all, that it may suck our life-blood out. In justice I will admit that, as a runner, the thoroughbred Mahratta *Ghorawalla* has no peer in the animal kingdom. A sporting friend and I once engaged in a steeple-chase with two of them. I was mounted on a great Cape horse, my friend on a wiry countrybred, and the men on their own proper legs, curious looking limbs without any flesh on them, only shiny black leather stretched over bones. The goal was

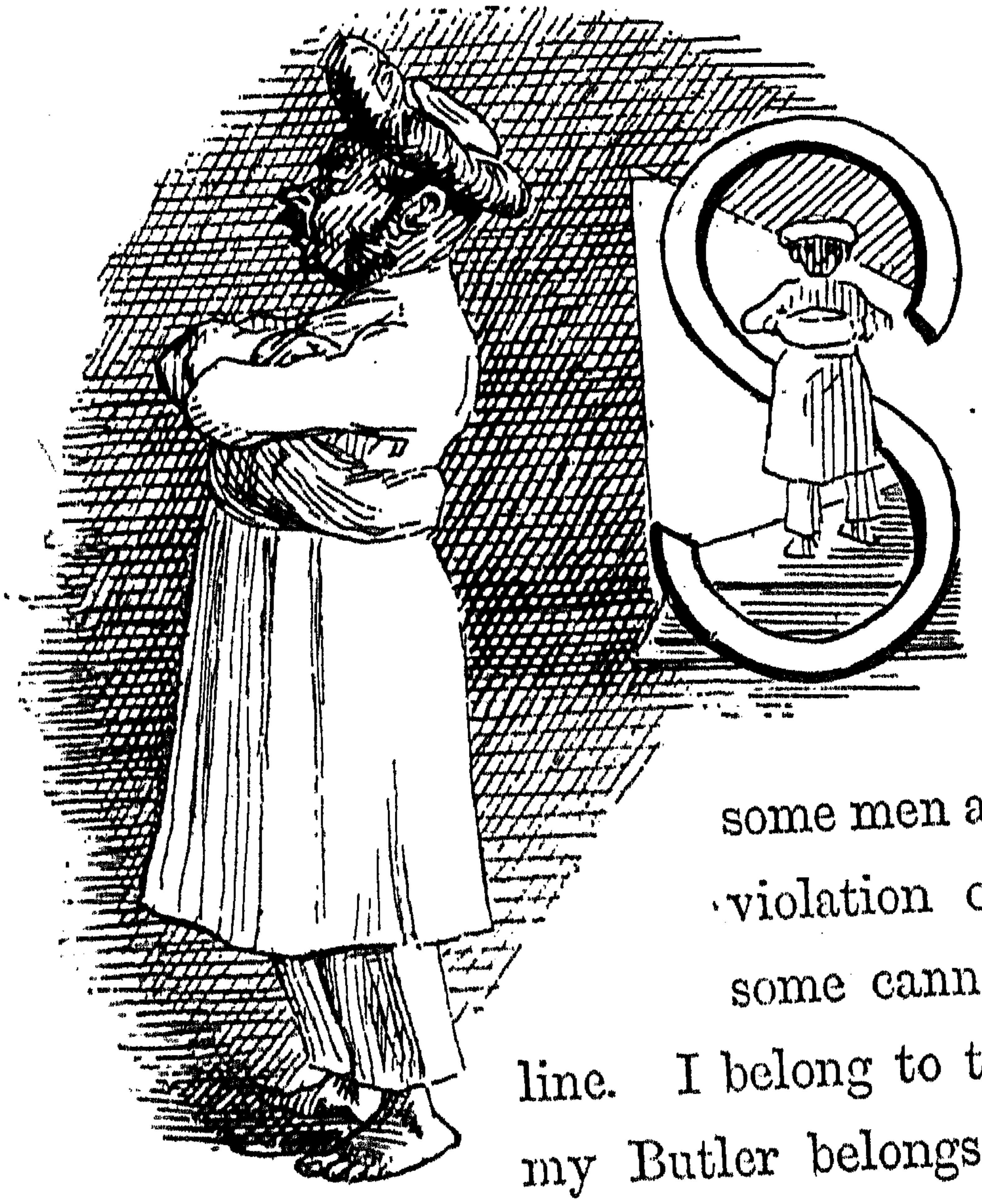
bakshees, twelve miles away. The ground at first favoured them, consisting of rice fields, along the *bunds* of which they ran like cats on a wall. Then we came to more open country and got well ahead, but at the last mile they put on the most splendid spurt I ever saw, and won by a hundred lengths.

It is also only justice to say that we do not give the *Ghorawalla* fair play. We artificialise him, dress him according to our tastes, conform him to our notions, cramp his ingenuity, and quench his affections. The *Ghorawalla* in his native state is no more like our domesticated Pandoo than the wild ass of Cutch* is like the costermonger's moke. We will have him like our own saddlery, plain and businesslike, but he is by nature like his national horse gear, ornamental, and if you let him alone, will effloresce in a red *fez* cap, with tassel, and a waistcoat of green baize. In such a guise he feels worthy to tend a piebald horse, caparisoned in crimson silk, with a tight martingale of red and yellow cord. He can take an interest in such a horse, and will himself educate it to walk on its hind legs and paw the air with its forefeet, or to progress at a royal amble, lifting both feet on one side at the same time, so that its body moves as steadily as if on wheels, and, to use the expressive language of a Brahmin friend of mine, the water in your stomach is not shaken. He will feed it with balls of *ghee* and *jagree*, that it may become rotund and sleek, he will shampoo its legs after hard work,

and address it as "my son." If it is disobedient, he will chastise it by plunging his knee into his stomach, and if it acquits itself well, he will plait its mane and dye the tip of its tail magenta. This loving relationship between him and his beast extends even to religion, and the horse enjoys the Hindoo festivals. During the Dussera it does not work, but comes to the door, festooned with garlands of marigold, and expects a rupee.

The coachman is to the *Ghorawalla* what cream is to skim milk, that is if you consider his substance. As regards his art he is a foreign product altogether, and I take little interest in him. There is an indigenous art of driving in this country, the driving of the bullock, but that is a great subject.

BOOTLAIR SAHEB—*ANGLICE*, THE BUTLER.



SOME dogs, when they hear a fiddle, are forced to turn over on their backs and howl; some are unmoved by music. So some men are tortured by every violation of symmetry, while some cannot discern a straight line. I belong to the former class, and my Butler belongs to the latter. He *would* lay the table in a way which almost gave me a crick in the neck, and certainly dislocated my temper, and he would not see that there was anything wrong. I reasoned with him, for he is an intelligent man. I pointed out to him, in his own vernacular, that the knives and forks were not

parallel, that the four dishes formed a trapezium, and that the cruet, taken with any two of the salt cellars, made a scalene triangle; in short, that there was not one parallelogram, or other regular figure, on the table. At last a gleam of light passed over his countenance. Yes, he understood it all; it was very simple; henceforth I should find everything straight. And here is the result! He has arranged everything with the utmost regularity, guiding himself by the creases in the tablecloth; but, unfortunately, he began by laying the cloth itself slantwise; consequently, I find myself with my back to one corner of the room and my face to another, and cannot get rid of the feeling that everything on the table is slightly the worse for liquor. And the Butler is in despair. What on earth, he thinks, can be wrong now? He evidently gives it up, and so do I.

I have already treated of the Boy, and to devote another chapter to the Butler may seem like making a distinction where there is no difference; but there is in reality a radical difference between the two offices, which is this, that your Boy looks after you, whereas your Butler looks after the other servants, and you look after him; at least, I hope you do. From this it follows that the Boy flourishes only in the free atmosphere of bachelordom. If master marries, the Boy sometimes becomes a Butler, but I have generally seen that the change was fatal to him. He feels a share at first in

master's happiness on the auspicious occasion, and begins to fit on his new dignity. He provides himself with a more magnificent *cumberbund*, enlarges the border of gold thread on his puggree, and furbishes up his English that he may converse pleasantly with *mem saheb*. He orders about the other servants with a fuller voice than before, and when anyone calls for a chair, he no longer brings one himself, but commands the *hamal* to do so. He feels supremely happy! Alas! before the *mem saheb* has been many weeks in the house, the change of air begins to disagree with him—not with his body, but with his spirit, and though he may bear up against it for a time, he sooner or later asks leave to go to his country. His new mistress is nothing loth to be rid of him, nor master either, for even his countenance is changed; and so the Butler's brief reign comes to an end, and he departs, deploring the unhappy match his master has made. Why could not so liberal and large-minded a *saheb* remain unmarried, and continue to cast the shadow of his benevolence on those who were so happy as to eat his salt, instead of taking to himself a *madam*, under whom there is no peace night or day? As he sits with his unemployed friends seeking the consolation of the never-failing *beeree*, the ex-butler narrates her ladyship's cantankerous ways, how she eternally fidgeted over a little harmless dust about the corners of the furniture, as if it was not the nature of

dust to settle on furniture; how she would have window panes washed which had never been washed before; her meanness in inquiring about the consumption of oil and milk and firewood, matters which the *saheb* had never stooped to look into; and her unworthy and insulting practice of locking up stores, and doling them out day by day, not to mention having the cow milked in her presence: all which made him so ashamed in the presence of the other servants that his life became bitter, and he was forced to ask for his *ruzza*.

Lalla, sitting next to him, remarks that no doubt one person is of one disposition and another of another disposition. "If it had been my destiny to remain in the service of Colonel Balloonpeel, all my days would have passed in peace; but he went to England when he got his *pencil*. Who can describe the calmness and goodness of his *madam*. She never asked a question. She put the keys in the Butler's hand, and if he asked for money she gave it. But one person is of one disposition and another is of another disposition."

"That is true," replies the ex-butler, "but the *sahebs* are better than the *mem sahebs*. The *sahebs* are hot and get angry sometimes, but under them a man can live and eat a mouthful of bread. With the *mem sahebs* it is nothing but worry, worry, worry. Why is this so dirty? Who broke that plate? When was that glass cracked? Alas! why do the *sahebs* marry such women?"

Old Ramjee then withdraws his *beeree* from his mouth and sheds light on the subject. "You see, in England there are very few women, for which reason it is that so many *sahebs* remain unmarried. So when a *saheb* goes home to his country for a wife, he must take what he can get."

"It is a question of destiny," says Lalla, "with them and with us. My first wife, who can tell how meek she was?

A PLOT AGAINST THE BUTLER.

She never opened her mouth. My present wife is such a *sheitan* that a man cannot live under the same roof with her. I have sent her to her country ten times, but what is the use? Will she stay there? The flavour has all gone out of my life."

And they all make noises expressive of sympathy.

The Butler being commander-in-chief of the household forces, I find one quality to be indispensable in him, and that is what the natives call *hookoomut*, the faculty of so commanding that other men obey. He has to control a sneaking *mussaul*, an obstinate *hamal*, a quarrelsome, or perhaps a drunken cook, a wicked dog-boy, a proud coachman, and a few turbulent *ghorawallas*, while he must conciliate, or outwit, the opposition headed by the *ayah*. If he cannot do this there will be factions, seditions, open mutiny, ending in appeals to you, to which if you give ear, you will foster all manner of intrigue, and put a premium on lies and hypocrisy; and it will be strange if you do not end by punishing the innocent and filling the guilty with unholy joy. In this country there is only one way of dealing with the squabbles of domestics and dependents, and that is the method of Gallio, who was a great man.

Besides the general responsibilities of his position as C.-in-C., the Butler has certain specific duties, such as to stand with arms folded behind you at meal time, to clean the silver, and to go to the bazaar in the morning. The last seems to be quite as much a prerogative as a duty, and the cook wants to go to law about it, regarding the Butler as an unlawful usurper. He asserts his claim by spoiling the meat which the Butler brings. Of course, there must be some reason why this duty, or privilege, is so highly valued, and no doubt

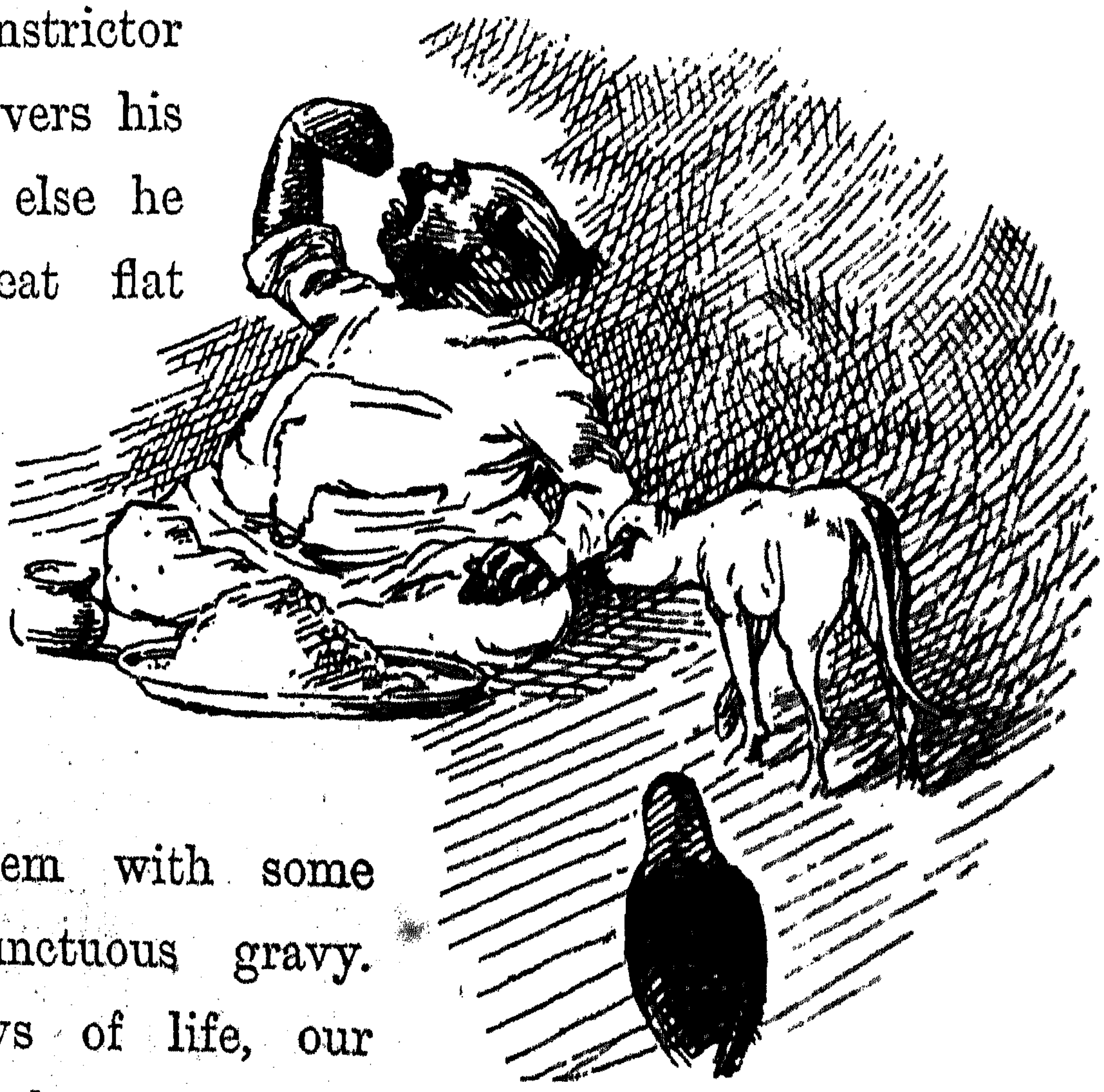
that reason is connected with the great Oriental principle, that of everything a man handles or controls, somewhat should adhere to his palm; but if you ask how this principle is applied or worked out, I can only reply that that is a matter on which I believe not one of us has any information, though for the most part we hold very emphatic opinions on the subject. I am quite certain that it may be laid down for a general rule that the Butler prefers indirect to direct taxation. He certainly would not reduce salt and customs duties to pave the way for an income tax. Neither would a Viceroy, perhaps, if he had to stay and reap the fruit of his works, instead of leaving that to his successor—but that is a political reflection which has no business here. The Butler, I say, wisely prefers indirect taxation and prospers. How, then, are you to checkmate him? Don't! A wise man never attempts what cannot be accomplished. I work on the assumption that my Butler is, like Brutus, an honourable man, treating him with consideration, and fostering his self-respect, even at the cost, perhaps, of a little hypocrisy. It is a gracious form of hypocrisy, and one that often justifies itself in the end, for the man tends to become what you assume that he is. For myself, I confess that I yield to the butler's claim to go to market, albeit I am assured that he derives unjust advantages therefrom, more easily than I reconcile myself to that other privilege of standing, with arms folded,

behind me while I breakfast, or tiffin, or dine. I can endure the suspicion that he is growing rich while I am growing poor, but that argus supervision over my necessary food is like a canker, and his indefatigable attentiveness would ruin the healthiest appetite. After removing the cover from the "beefysteak" and raising one end of the dish that I may get at the gravy more easily, he offers me potatoes, and I try to overcome an instinctive repugnance to the large and mealy tuber under which he has adjusted the spoon in order to lighten my labour. After the potatoes there are vegetables. Then he moves the salt a little nearer me and I help myself. Next he presses the cruet-stand on my attention, putting the spoon into the mustard pot and taking the stopper out of the sauce bottle. I submit in the hope that I may now be allowed to begin; but he has salad or tomatoes or something else requiring attention. I submit once more and then assume my knife and fork. He watches his opportunity and insinuates a pickle bottle, holding the fork in his right hand. I feel that it is time to make a stand, so I give him one unspeakable look and proceed with my meal, whereupon he retreats and I breathe a little more freely. But no; he is at my left hand again with bread. To do him justice, he is quite willing to save me annoyance by impaling a slice on the knife and transferring it to my plate, but I prefer to help myself, which encourages him to return to the charge with butter and

then jam. This looks like the end, but his resources are infinite. His eye falls on the sugar basin standing beside my teacup, and he immediately takes it up and, coming round to my left side, holds it to my nose. All this time sit I, like Tantalus, with the savoriest of Domingo's "beefysteaks" before me and am not allowed to taste it. But I know that in every operation he is animated by an exalted sense of blended duty and prerogative, and if I could really open his mind to the thought that the least of his attentions was dispensable, his whole nature would be demoralized at once; so I endure and grow lean. Another thing which works towards the same result is a practice that he has of studying my tastes, and when he thinks he has detected a preference for a particular dish, plying me with that until the very sight of it becomes nauseous. At one time he fed me with "broon custard" pudding for about six months, until in desperation I interdicted that preparation for evermore, and he fell back upon "lemol custard." Thus my luxuries are cut off one after another and there is little left that I can eat.

Our grandfathers used to have Parsee butlers in tall hats to wait upon them, but that race is now extinct. The Butler on this side of India is now a Goanese, or a Soortee, or, more rarely, a Mussulman. Each of these has, doubtless, his own characteristics; but have you ever stepped back a few paces and contemplated, not your own or anyone else's individual

servant, but the entire phenomenon of an Indian Butler? Here is a man whose food by nature is curry and rice, before a hillock of which he sits cross-legged, and putting his five fingers into it, makes a large bolus, which he pushes into his mouth. He repeats this till all is gone, and then he sleeps like a boa-constrictor until he recovers his activity; or else he feeds on great flat cakes of wheat flour, off which he rends jagged pieces and lubricates them with some spicy and unctuous gravy. All our ways of life, our meats and drinks, and all our notions of propriety and fitness in connection with the complicated business of appeasing our hunger as becomes our station, all these are a foreign land to him: yet he has made himself altogether at home in them. He has a sound practical knowledge of all our viands, their substance, and the mode of their preparation, their qualities, relation-



CURRY AND RICE.

ships and harmonies, and the exact place they hold in our great cenatorial system. He knows all liquors also by name, with their places and times of appearing. And he is as great in action as in knowledge. When he takes the command of a *burra khana* he is a Wellington. He plans with foresight, and executes with fortitude and self-reliance. See him marshal his own troops and his auxiliary butlers while he carves and dispenses the joint! Then he puts himself at their head and invades the dining-room. He meets with reverses;—the claret-jug collides with a dish in full sail and sheds its contents on his white coat; the punkah rope catches his turban and tosses it into a lady's lap, exposing his curiously shaven head to the public merriment; but, though disconcerted, he is not defeated. He never forgets his position or loses sight of his dignity. His mistress discusses him with such wit as may be at her command, and he understands but smiles not. When the action is over he retires from the field, divests himself of his robes of office and sits down, as he was bred to do, before that hillock of curry and rice.

Even good Homer nods, and I confess I am still haunted by the memory of a day when my Chief was my guest, and the butler served up red herrings neatly done up in—*The Times of India!*

Domingo, the Cook.

I DO not remember who was the author of the observation that a great nation in a state of decay betakes itself to the fine arts. Perhaps no one has made the observation yet. It is certainly among the records of my brain, but I may possibly have put it there myself. If so, I make it now, for the possibilities of originality are getting scarce and will soon disappear from the face of the earth as completely as the mastodon. The present application of the saying is to the people of Goa, who, while they carry through the world patronymics which breathe of conquest and discovery, devote their energies rather to the violin and the art of cookery. The caviller may object to the application of the words "fine art" to culinary operations, but the objection rests on superficial thought. A deeper view will show that

art is in the artist, not in his subject or his materials. Perusal of the Codes of the Financial Department showed me many years ago that the retrenchment of my pay and allowances could be elevated to a fine art by devotion of spirit, combined with a fine sense of law. And to Domingo the preparation of dinner is indeed a fine art. Trammel his genius, confine him within the limits of what is commonly called a "plain dinner," and he cannot cook. He stews his meat before putting it into a pie, he thickens his custard with flour instead of eggs, he roasts a leg of mutton by boiling it first and doing "littlee brown" afterwards; in short, what does he not do? It is true of all his race. How loathsome were Pedro's mutton chops, and Camilo could not boil potatoes decently for a dinner of less than four courses. But let him loose on a *burra khana*, give him *carte blanche* as to sauces and essences and spicery, and all his latent faculties and concealed accomplishments unfold themselves like a lotus flower in the morning. No one could have suspected that the shame-faced little man harboured such resources. If he has not always the subtlest perception of the harmonies of flavours, what a mastery he shows of strong effects and striking contrasts, what fecundity of invention, what a play of fancy in decoration, what manual dexterity, what rapidity and certainty in all his operations! And the marvel increases when we consider the simplicity of his implements and

materials. His studio is fitted with half a dozen small fire-places, and furnished with an assortment of copper pots, a chopper, two tin spoons—but he can do without these,—a ladle made of half a cocoanut shell at the end of a stick, and a slab of stone with a stone roller on it; also a rickety table, a very gloomy and ominous looking table, whose undulating surface is chopped and hacked and scarred, begrimed, be-smeared, smoked, oiled, stained with juices of many sub-stances. On this table he minces meat, chops onions, rolls pastry and sleeps; a very useful table. In the midst of these he bustles about, putting his face at intervals into one of his fires and blowing through a short bamboo tube, which is his bellows, such a potent blast that for a moment his whole head is enveloped in a cloud of ashes and cinders, which also descend copiously on the half-made tart and the *soufflé* and the custard. Then he takes up an egg, gives it three smart raps with the nail of his forefinger, and in half a second the yoke is in one vessel and the white in another. The fingers of his left hand are his strainer. Every second or third egg he tosses aside, having detected, as it passed through the said strainer that age had rendered it unsuitable for his purposes; sometimes he does not detect this. From eggs he proceeds to onions, then he is taking the stones out of raisins, or shelling peas. There is a standard English cookery book which com-mences most of its instructions with the formula, "wash

your hands carefully, using a nail brush." Domingo does not observe this ceremony, but he often wipes his fingers upon his pantaloons. It occurs to me, however, that I do not wisely pursue this theme; for the mysteries of Domingo's craft are no fit subject for the gratification of an irreverent curiosity. Those words of the poet,

> "Where ignorance is bliss,
> 'Tis folly to be wise,"

have no truer application. You will reap the bliss when you sit down to the savoury result.

Though Domingo is naturally shy, and does not make a display of his attainments, he is a man of education, and is quite prepared, if you wish it, to write out his *menu*. Here is a sample:—

Soup.
Salary Soup.
Fis.
Heel fish fry.
Madish.
Russel Pups. Wormsil mole.
Joint.
Roast Bastard.
Toast.
Anchovy Poshteg.
Puddin.
Billimunj. Ispunj roli.

I must take this opportunity to record a true story of a *menu*, though it does not properly pertain to Domingo, but an

ingenious Ramaswamy, of Madras. This man's master liked everything very proper, and insisted on a written *menu* at every meal. One morning Ramaswamy was much embarrassed, for the principal dish at breakfast was to be devilled turkey. "Devil very bad word," he said to himself; "how can write?" At last he solved the difficulty, and the dish appeared as "D—d turkey."

Our surprise at Domingo's attainments is no doubt due very much to the humble attire in which we are accustomed to see him, his working dress being a *quondam* white cotton jacket and a pair of blue checked pantaloons of a strong material made in jails, or two pairs, the sound parts of one being arranged to underlie the holes in the other. When once we have seen the gentleman dressed for church on a festival day, with the beaver which has descended to him from his illustrious grandfather's benevolent master respectfully held in his hand, and his well brushed hair shining with a bountiful allowance of cocoanut ointment, surprise ceases. He is indeed a much respected member of society, and enjoys the esteem of his club, where he sometimes takes chambers when out of employment. By his fellow servants, too, he is recognised as a professional man, and called The Maistrie, but, like ourselves, he is an exile, and, like some of us, he is separated from his wife and children, so his thoughts run much upon furlough and ultimate retirement, and he adopts a

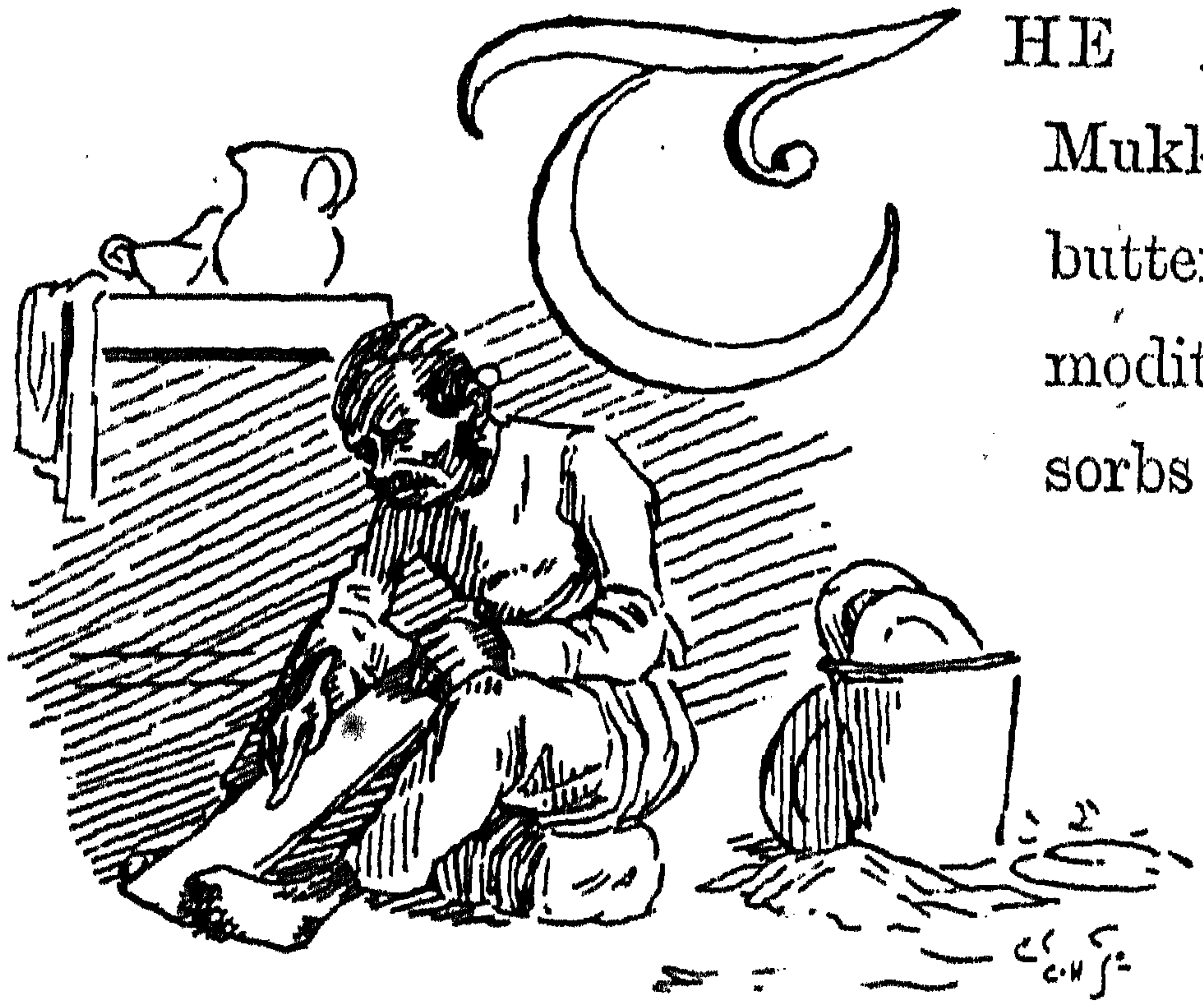
humble style of life with the object of saving money. In this object he succeeds most remarkably. Little as we know of the home life of our Hindoo servants, we know almost less about that of Domingo, for he rarely has his family with him. Is he a fond husband and an indulgent father? I fancy he is when his better nature is uppermost, but I am bound to confess that the cardinal vice of his character is cruelty, not the passive cruelty of the pure Asiatic, but that ferocious cruelty which generally marks an infusion of European blood. The infusion in him has filtered through so many generations that it must be very weak indeed, but it shows itself. When I see an emaciated crow with the point of its beak chopped off, so that it cannot pick up its food, or another with a tin pot fastened with wire to its bleeding nose, I know whose handiwork is there. Domingo suffers grievously from the depredations of crows, and when his chance comes he enjoys a savage retribution. Some allowance must be made for the hardening influence of his profession; familiarity with murder makes him callous. When he executes a *moorgee* he does it in the way of sport, and sits, like an ancient Roman, *verso pollice*, enjoying the spectacle of its dying struggles.

According to his lights Domingo is a religious man; that is to say, he wears a necklace of red beads, eats fish on Fridays, observes festivals and holidays, and gives pretty liberally to the church under pressure. So he maintains a

placid condition of conscience while his monthly remittance to Goa exceeds the amount of his salary. He rises early on Sunday morning to go to confession, and I would give something to have the place, just one day, of the good father to whom he unbosoms himself. But perhaps I am wrong. I daresay he believes he has nothing to confess.

One story more to teach us to judge charitably of Domingo. A lady was inveighing to a friend against the whole race of Indian cooks as dirty, disorderly, and dishonest. She had managed to secure the services of a Chinese cook, and was much pleased with the contrast. Her friend did not altogether agree with her, and was sceptical about the immaculate Chinaman. "Put it to the test," said the lady; "just let us pay a visit to your kitchen, and then come and see mine." So they went together. What need to describe the *Bobberjee-Khana*? They glanced round, and hurried out, for it was too horrible to be endured long. When they went to the Chinaman's kitchen, the contrast was indeed striking. The pots and pans shone like silver; the table was positively sweet; everything was in its proper place, and Chang himself, sitting on his box, was washing his feet in the soup tureen!

The Mussaul, or Man of Lamps.



THE *Mussaul's* name is Mukkun, which means butter, and of this commodity I believe he absorbs as much as he can honestly or dishonestly come by. How else does the surface of him acquire that glossy, oleaginous appearance, as if he would take fire easily and burn well? I wish we could do without him! The centre of his influence, a small room in the suburbs of the dining-room, which he calls the *dispence*, or *dispence-khana*, is a place of unwholesome sights and noisome odours, which it is good not to visit unless as Hercules visited the stables of Augeas. The instruments of his profession are there, a large *handie* full of very greasy water, with bits of lemon peel and fragments of broken victuals swimming in it, and a short, stout stick, with a little bunch of foul rag tied to one

end of it. Here the *Mussaul* sits on the ice *numda* while we have our meals, and as each plate returns from the table, he takes charge of it, and transfers to his mouth whatever he finds on it, for he is of the *omnivora*, like the crow. Then he seizes his weapon of offence, and, dipping the rag end into the *handie*, gives the plate a masterly wipe, and lays it on the table upside down, or dries it with a damask table napkin. The butler encourages him for some reason to use up the table napkins in this way. I suppose it is because he does not like to waste the *dhobie* on anything before it is properly soiled. When the *Mussaul* has disposed of the breakfast things in this summary way, he betakes himself to the great work of the day, the polishing of the knives. He first plunges the ivory handles into boiling water, and leaves them to steep for a time, then he seats himself on the ice again, and, arranging a plank of wood in a sloping position, holds it fast with his toes, rubs it well with a piece of bath brick, and and commences to polish with all the energy which he has saved by the neglect of other duties. Hour after hour the squeaky, squeaky, squeaky sound of that board plays upon your nerves, not the nerves of the ear, but the nerves of the mind, for there is more in it than the ear can convey. Every sight and every sound in this world comes to us inextricably woven into the warp which the mind supplies, and, as you listen to that baleful sound, you seem to feel with your

finger points the back of each good, new knife getting sharper and sharper, and to watch its progress as it wears away at the point of greatest pressure, until the end of the blade is connected with the rest by a narrow neck, which eventually breaks, and the point falls off, leaving the knife in that condition so familiar to us all, when the blade, about

MORE LIGHT.

three inches long, ends in a jagged, square point, the handle having, meanwhile, acquired a rich orange hue. Oh, those knives! those knives!

Etymologically Mukkun is a man of lamps, and, when he has brushed your boots and stowed them away under your bed, putting the left boot on the right side and *vice versa*, in order that the toes may point outwards, as he considers they

should, then he addresses himself to this part of his duty. Old Bombayites can remember the days of cocoanut, when he had to begin his operations during the cold season by putting a row of bottles out in the sun to melt the frozen oil; but kerosine has changed all that, and he has nothing to do but to trim the wick into that fork-tailed pattern in which he delights, and which secures the minimum of light with the maximum destruction of chimneys, to smear the outside of each lamp with his greasy fingers, to conjure away a gallon or so of oil, and to meet remonstrance with a child-like query, "Do I drink kerosene oil?" Then he unbends, and gives himself up to a gentle form of recreation in which he finds much enjoyment. This is to perch on a low wall or big stone at the garden gate, and watch the carriages and horses as they pass by. Other *Mussauls, ghorawallas,* and passing ice coolies stop and perch beside him, and sometimes an *ayah* or two, with a perambulator and its weary little occupant, grace the gathering. I suppose the topics of the day are discussed, the chances of a Russian invasion, the dearness of rice, and the events which led to the dismissal of Mr. Smith's old *Mussaul* Canjee. Then the time for the lighting of lamps arrives, and Mukkun returns to his duties.

You might not perhaps suspect it, but Mukkun is a prey to vanity. The pure oily transparency of his Italian complexion commands his admiration, and he thinks much of

those glossy love-locks which emerge from his turban and curl in front of his ears. Several times a day he goes into his room to contemplate himself in a small hand mirror, and to wind up the love-locks on his finger. Poor Mukkun has, indeed, a very human side, and the phenomenon which we recognise as our *Mussaul* is not the whole of him. By birth he is an agriculturist, and there is in the environs of Surat a little plot of land and a small dilapidated hut in one corner of it, overgrown with monstrous gourds, which he thinks of as home, sweet home. There are his young barbarians all at play, but he, their sire, is forced to seek service abroad because, as he practically expresses it, the produce of his small field is not sufficient to fill so many bellies. But, wherever he wanders, his heart—for he has a heart—flutters about that rickety hut, and as he sits polishing your boots of a morning, you may hear him pensively humming to himself:—

> Beatus ille qui, procul negotiis,
> Ut prisca gens mortalium,
> Paterna rura bobus exercet suis,
> Solutus omni fœnore.

He puts a peculiar pathos into the last line, for he is grievously haunted by an apparition in the form of an old man with a small red turban, gold earrings, and grey beard parted in the middle, who flourishes a paper in his face and talks of the debtors' gaol, and hints that he will have the little house

and field near Surat. Mukkun first fell into the net of this spider many years ago, when he wanted a few hundred rupees to enable him to celebrate the marriage of his little child. He signed a bond for twice the amount he received then, and it continues to increase from year to year, though he has paid the principal twice over in interest; at least he thinks he has, but he is not a good accountant. Every now and then he is required to sign some fresh document, of the contents of which he knows nothing, but the effect of which is always the same—*viz.*, to heap up his liabilities and rivet his fetters more firmly, and punctually on pay day every month, the grim old man waylays him and compels him to disgorge his wages, allowing him so much grain and spices as will keep him in condition till next pay day. In a word, Mukkun is a slave. Yet he does not jump into the garden well, nor his quietus make with a bare bodkin. No, he plods through life, eats his rice and curry with gusto, smokes his cigarette with satisfaction, oils his lovelocks, borrows money from the cook to buy a set of silver buttons for his waistcoat, and when he tires of them, pawns them to pay for a velvet cap on which he has set his heart. In short, he behaves *à la Mukkun*, and no insight is to be had by examining his case through English spectacles; but it is our strange infirmity, being the most singular people on earth, to regard ourselves as typical of the human race, and *ergo* to conclude that what

is good for us cannot be otherwise than good for all the world. Hence many of our anti-tyranny agitations and philanthropies, not always beneficial to the subjects of them, and also many of our misplaced sympathies. We see a spider eating a fly, and long to crush the spider, while we shed a tear for the fly. But the spider is much the higher animal of the two. It labours long hours laying out a net, and then waits all day for the fruit of its toil. Insects are caught and escape again, the net gets broken, and when, after many disappointments, the spider secures a fat fly, what advantage does it derive? A meal; just what the fly got by sitting in a pit of manure and sipping till it could sip no more. Doom that fly to the life which the spider leads, and it would drown itself in your milk jug on the spot, unable to bear up under such a weight of care and toil. In this parable the fly is Mukkun and the spider is Shylock, and my sympathies are not wholly given to the former. I quite admit that Shylock worries him cruelly, and if he had not given hostages to fortune, he would abscond with a light heart to some distant station where he might forget his old debts and contract new ones. But this is not the alternative before him. The alternative is to take care of his money, not to buy things which he cannot afford, to do without the silver buttons, and postpone the velvet cap, all which would put a strain on his mental and moral constitution, under which he would wear out in a week. He must find

some other *modus vivendi* than that. If he had lived in the world's infancy, he would have sold himself and his family to someone who would have fed him and clothed him, and relieved him of the cares of life. But Britons never, never, never shall be slaves, and under our rule Mukkun is forced to share that disability; so he attains his end in an indirect way, and lives thereafter in such happiness as nature has given him capacity to enjoy. Shylock will neither put him into gaol nor seize his field. We do not send our milch cow to the butcher. Shylock owns a hundred such as he, and much trouble they give him.

Mukkun lives in dread of the devil. Nothing will induce him to pass at night by places where the foul fiend is known to walk, nor will he sleep alone without a light.

IN DREAD OF THE DEVIL.

THE HAMAL.

THE *Hamal* is a creature which gets up very early in the morning, before anyone is out of bed, and opens the doors and windows with as much noise as may be. He leaves the hooks unfastened, that a *feu-de-joie* may celebrate the advent of the first gust of wind. He drops the lower bolts of the doors, so that they may rake up the matting every time they are opened. Then he proceeds to dust the furniture with the duster which hangs over his shoulder. He does this because it is his duty, and with no view to any practical result;

consequently it never occurs to him to look at what he is doing, and you will afterwards find curiously shaped patches of dust which have escaped the sweep of his "towal." He next turns his attention to the books in the bookcase, and we are all familiar with his ravages there. He is usually content to bang them well with his duster, but I refer to high days, when he takes each book out and caresses it on both sides, replacing it upside down, and putting the different volumes of each work on different shelves. All this he does, not of malice, but simply because 'tis his nature to. He does not disturb the cobwebs on the corners of the bookcase, because you never told him to do so. As he moves grunting about the room, the duster falls from his shoulder, and he picks it up with his toes to avoid the fatigue of stooping. When all the dusting is done, and the table-covers and ornaments are replaced, then he proceeds to shake the carpets and sweep the floor, for it is one of his ways, when left to himself, to dust first and sweep after. Finally he disposes of the rubbish which his broom has collected, by stowing it away under a cupboard, or pushing it out over the doorstep among the ferns and calladiums.

Such is the *Hamal* in his youth, and as he grows older he gets more so. About middle life he sets hard, like plaster of Paris, his senses get obfuscated, and a shell appears to form on the outside of his intellect, so that access to his under-

standing becomes very difficult. Sometimes his temper also grows crabbed, and *noli me tangere* writes itself distinctly across the mark of his god on his old brow. A *Hamal* in this phase is the most impracticable animal in this universe. When found fault with, he never answers back, but he enters on a vigorous conversation with himself, which is like a tune on a musical box, for it must be allowed to go until it runs itself out; nothing short of smashing the instrument will stop it. How well I remember one veteran of this type, from whose colloquies with his own soul I gathered that he had been fifty-six years in gentlemen's service, and never served any but gentlemen until he came to me. He computed his age, I think, at seventy-two, and asked leave to attend the funeral of his grandfather. Sometimes, happily, the *Hamal's* senility takes the direction of benevolence. Who does not know the benign, stupid old man, with his snowy whiskers and kindly smile, which seems to grow kindlier with every tooth he loses!

It is a practical question whether you should endure the *Hamal,* or address yourself to the task of his reformation, and I am content to make myself singular by advocating the latter for two reasons; firstly, because he cannot be endured; secondly, because I cherish a fantastic faith in his reformability,—at least if you take him in his youth, before he has set. I believe we fail to cure

him: either because we do not try, or because we dismiss him before we succeed. Another great impediment to success in this enterprise is the foolish habit of getting

OOSWASTY LUKREE.

wrathful. An untimely explosion of wrath will generally blow a sensitive *Hamal's* wits quite out of his own reach, and of course, out of yours; or, if he is of the stolid sort, he will

set it down as a phenomenon incidental to *sahebs*, but without any bearing on the matter in hand, and he will go on as before. Besides, a state of indignation is very detrimental to your own command of the language, and if you could in cold blood take your "Forbes" and study some of the sentences which you fulminated in your ebullitions of anger, you would cease to wonder that the subject of them was such an idiot.

Hum roz roz hookum day,
Tum roz roz hookum nay,
Ooswasty lukree—(whack, whack)

went home, I have no doubt, but it is the gift of few to be at once so luminous and so forcible. Try handling your *Hamal* in another way. Call him mildly—a mild tone thaws his understanding—and say to him, "Look here, my son. Do you see this gold writing on the backs of these books? For what purpose is it?" He will reply, "Who knows?" Then you can proceed, "That writing is the mark by which you may know the head of any book. Now consider, should a book stand on its head?" If he replies, "How should a book stand on its head?" then you are getting access to his intelligence, and may lead him on gradually to the conclusion that, whenever he puts a book into the shelves, he should make it stand so that the writing on the back of it may be uppermost. I tell you he will beam with intelligence, and rise earlier next morning to put his new learning into

practice. After a few days he will forget and relapse into his old ways, but you must have patience.

After all, I think we could put up with the *Hamal* if only he would not try to think. This is his crowning vice. In vain I try to impress upon him that I engaged him to obey orders, and would rather do the thinking myself. Every now and then, at some particular phase of the moon, he sets his intellect in operation, and the consequences are, as the Brahmin boy described the result of his examination, "appalling." It was our *Hamal's* duty to fill the filter, and at a time when the water was very bad, orders were given that it should be boiled before being filtered. One day, my wife saw the *Hamal* in the act of filling the filter, and it occurred to her to warn him to let the water cool first, lest he might crack the filter. "Oh yes," said he, "I thought of that. After boiling the water, I cool it down by mixing an equal quantity of cold water with it, and then I put it into the filter."

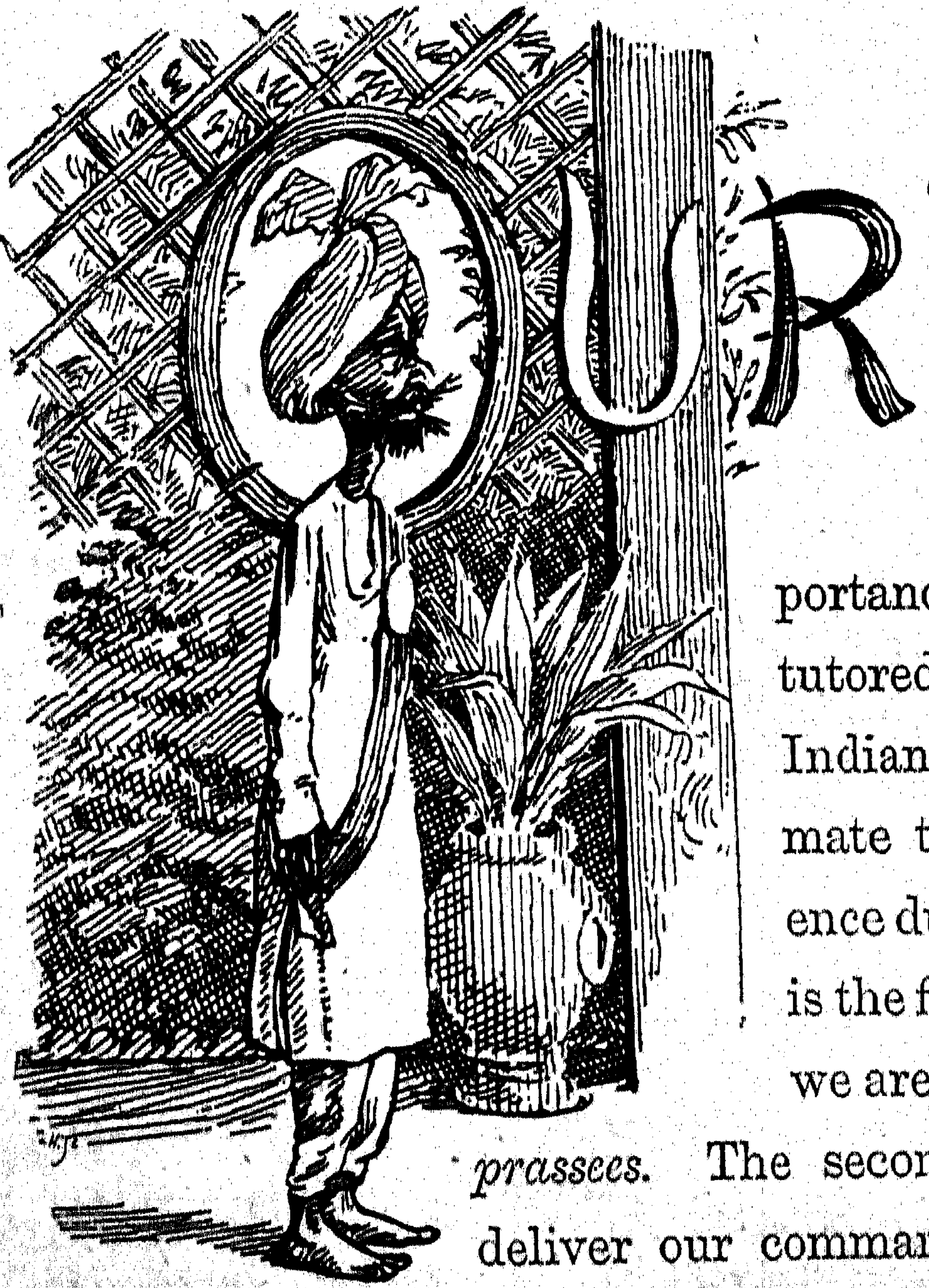
In Bombay, since hard times set in, the offices of *Hamal* and *mussaul* have got a little mixed, and a man will show you characters testifying that he has served in both capacities. Such a man is, properly speaking, simply a *mussaul* who has tried to do the *Hamal's* work. The cleaner of furniture and the lighter of lamps and washer of plates and dishes cannot change places or be combined. I have read that the making

of one English pin employs nine men, but it is a vain boast. The rudiments of division of labour are not understood in Europe. In this country every trade is a breed. Rama is by birth a cleaner of furniture. This kind of employment came into the country with our rule, so that the domestic *Hamal*, who is an offshoot of the *palkee hamal*, or "bearer," has not had time to become what fanciers would call a permanent strain, and you will find that you can convert Rama into a *chupprasse*, a *malee*, or even a *ghorawalla*, but into a *mussaul* never. He is a *shoodra*, sprung from the feet of Brahma, and the Brahman, who sprung from the head of the same figure, despises him, but not with that depth of contempt with which he himself despises the *mussaul*, who is an outcast, and sprang from nowhere in particular. He cannot conceive that thirty generations of washing could purify the descendants of Mukkun so that he might touch them and not be unclean. You, his master, rank theoretically with Mukkun, and he will neither touch your meats nor the plate off which you have eaten them. He will keep your house clean, and even perform some personal services, for he has a liberal mind, and is there not also a *toolsee* plant in a pot on a kind of earthen altar in front of his hut, before which he performs purificatory ceremonies every morning? And does he not bathe after leaving your presence before he eats? If you pass by the clean place where he is about to cook his

food in the morning, you will see a large pot of water on the fire. When this gets warm—for Rama is not a Spartan—he will stand on a smooth stone, as sparingly clad as it is possible to be, and pour the water on his head, polishing himself vigorously as it runs down his limbs; then, after dressing his long hair and tying it in a knot on the top of his head, he will sit down to eat, in a place by himself, with the feeling that he has warded off defilement from that which goeth in at his mouth. That which goeth out of his mouth gives him no concern.

PURIFICATION.

THE BODY-GUARD.



OUR *Chupprassees* are the outward expression of our authority, and the metre-gauge of our importance. By them the untutored mind of the poor Indian is enabled to estimate the amount of reverence due to each of us. This is the first purpose for which we are provided with *Chupprassees.* The second is that they may deliver our commands, post our letters, and escort the coming generation of Government servants in their little perambulators. As the number required for the first purpose usually far exceeds the number required for the second, there is danger of Satan finding mischief for their

idle hands to do, and it becomes our duty to ward off this danger by occupying their hands with something which is not mischief. This we do faithfully, and the *Chupprassee* always reminds me of those tools we see advertised, which combine hammer, pincers, turnscrew, chisel, foot-rule, hatchet, file, toothpick, and life preserver. Mrs. Smart bewailed the bygone day when every servant in her house was a Government *Chupprassee* except the *khansamah* and a Portuguese *ayah*. I did not live in that day, but in my own I have seen the *Chupprassee* discharge many functions. He is an expert *shikaree*, sometimes a good tailor or barber, not a bad cook at a pinch, a handy table boy, and, above all an unequalled child's servant. There can be little doubt, if the truth were told, that Little Henry's bearer was a *Chupprassee*. He also milks the cow, waters the garden, catches butterflies, skins birds, blows eggs, and runs after tennis balls. If you ask himself what his duties are, he will reply promptly that it is his duty to wear the sircar's belt and to "be present." And the camel is not more wonderfully fitted for the desert than is Luxumon for the discharge of these solemn responsibilities. He is like a carriage clock, able to sleep in any conceivable position; and such is his mental constitution that, when not sleeping, he is able to "be present" hour after hour without feeling any desire for change of occupation. *Ennui* never troubles him, time never hangs heavy on his

hands; he sits as patiently as a cow and chews the cud of *pan suparee,* and he bespatters the walls with a sanguinary pigment produced by the mastication of the same. He needs no food, but he goes out to drink water thirty-five times a day, and, when he returns refreshed, a certain acrid odour penetrates every crevice of the house, almost dislodging the rats and exterminating the lesser vermin. To liken it to the smell of tobacco would give civilized mankind a claim against me for defamation of character.

I will sketch my ideal of a model *Chupprassee.* He is a follower of the Prophet, for your Gentoo has too many superstitions and scruples to be generally useful. He parts his short black beard in the middle and brushes it up his cheek on either side, the ends of his moustache are trimly curled, he wears his turban a little on one side, carries himself like a soldier, and is always scrupulously clean. He comes into your presence with a salutation which expresses his own dignity, while it respects yours. He wishes to know whether the protector of the poor has any commands for his slave. When you intimate your wishes he responds with a formula which is the same for all occasions—"Your Lordship's commands shall be executed." And they are executed. If he knows of difficulties or impossibilities, he keeps them to himself. Alas! this is an ideal, how antipodal sometimes to the real! I am thinking of the gigantic Sheikh Mahomed,

with his terrible beard and womanly voice, who would convey my commands to a menial of lower degree and return in five minutes to detail the objections which that person had raised. Another type of Mahomedan *Chupprassee*, whom we see is to

AN UNEQUALLED CHILD'S SERVANT.

abhor, expresses his opinion of himself by letting half a yard of rag hang down from his turban behind. He calls himself a *Syed* and, perhaps, on account of the sanctity implied in this, forbears to wash himself or his clothes. This man is clever, officious, familiar, servile, and very fond of the position of umbrella-bearer in ordinary to your person: therefore,

transfer him to the personal staff of some native dignitary, where he will be appreciated. If my model does not suit you, there are many types to choose from. We have the lofty and sonorous *Purdaisee,* the *Rajpoot,* son of kings, the *Bhundaree,* or hereditary climber of palm trees, the Israelite, the low caste, useful, intelligent *Mahar,* and many more. Even the Brahmin in this iron age becomes a *Chupprassee.* But three-fourths of all our belted satellites come from one little district south of Bombay, known to our fathers as Rutnagherry, re-christened Ratnagiri by the Hon. W. W. Hunter, C.I.E., A.B.C., D.E.F., etc. Every country has its own special products; the Malabar Coast sends us cocoanuts and pepper; artichokes come from Jerusalem; ducks, lace, cooks, and fiddlers from Goa. So Rutnagherry produces pineapples and Mahrattas, and the Mahrattas do not eat the pineapples. Till quite recently they employed themselves exterminating each other, burning each other's villages and crops, and inventing new ways of torturing old men to make them confess where their money was buried. We have stopped these practices without stopping the religious arrangements for keeping up the supply of the race; so the Mahratta marries, as in duty bound, and multiplies, and then casts about for some way of maintaining his growing family; and our *Chupprassee* system, looked at politically, is a grand escape pipe. Pandurang Huree gives the Mahrattas the palm,

as liars, over all the other races of India. He may be right, but where excellence is so universal, comparison becomes doubly odious. Some Mahrattas put *rao* after their names and treat themselves with much respect, especially if they can grow a little island of whisker on each cheek and run the moustache into it. These men differ from common Mahrattas in the same way as Mr. Wilberforce Jones, or Mr. Palmerston Smith, differs from the ordinary run of Joneses and Smiths.

How uniformly does ambition rule us all! The young *rao*, fired by the hope of wearing a belt, makes a bold resolve to leave his father and mother, his wife and children, his brothers, their wives and children, his uncles, aunts, and cousins, and the little hut in which they have all lived so happily since he was a little, naked, crawling thing, dressed in a silver rupee. He looks for the last time on the buffalo and the lame pariah dog, ties up his cooking pots and a change of raiment in a red handkerchief, and starts on foot, amid the howling of females, for the great town, a hundred miles away, where the brother-in-law of his cousin's wife's uncle is on the personal staff of the Collector. He fears that the water of the place may not suit his constitution, but he risks that and other unknown perils. Arriving at his destination, he works his interest by quartering himself on his influential connection, who, finding that an extra seer of rice

has to be boiled for every meal, leaves no stone unturned to find employment for him. First a written petition is drawn up by the local petition writer, in the following terms:—"Most Honoured and Respected Sir,—Although I am conscious that my present step will apparently be deemed an unjustifiable and unpardonable one, tantamounting to a preposterous hardihood in presuming to trespass (amidst your multifarious vocations) on your valuable time, yet placing implicit reliance on your noble nature and magnanimity of heart, I venture to do so, and ardently trust you will pardon me. Learning that a vacancy of a sepoy has occurred under your kind auspices, I beg most respectfully to tender my services for the same, and crave your permission to invite your benign attention to the episodes of my chequered life, though of a doleful and sombre nature, and *concatenation* of melancholy events that have made their visitations. My eldest brother died one year since, leaving an heritage of a relict and two female issues to bemoan and lament his premature and irreparable loss. And two months since my revered parent paid debt of nature, at 2 p.m. on 15th February, A.D. 18—, thus leaving the entire burden of 13 (thirteen) souls on my individual shoulders, which, in my present and forlorn circumferences, I am unable to cope with. I, therefore, throw myself on your benevolent clemency and humane consideration, and implore you to confer the vacancy in question

which will enable me to meet the daily unavoidable returning requisites of domestic life in all their varied ramifications, and relieve a famishing family from the jaws of penury and privation. By thus delivering me from an impending impossibility most prejudicial to my purse resources, you will confer on your humble servant a boon which will be always vivid on the tablet of my breast, never to be effaced until the period that I am sojurning on the stage of this sublunary world's theatre." The petition goes on to explain that all the unhappy petitioner's efforts to earn an honest livelihood by the perspiration of his brow have been frustrated owing to the sins committed by his soul in a former birth, and ends with religious reflections and prayers. While this is presented to the Collector, the candidate stands under a tree at some distance and rehearses, with palpitating heart, the *salaam* he will make if admitted to the august presence. Life and death seem to hang on the impression which may be produced by that *salaam*. But the cousin's wife's uncle's brother-in-law sets other machinery in motion. He humbles himself and makes up an old quarrel with the Naik; he flatters the butler till that great man is pleased and promises his influence; and he wins the Sheristedar's vote by telling him earnestly that all the district knows he is virtually the Collector and whatever he recommends is done. Nor is the *ayah* forgotten, for the *ayah* has access to the *madam*, and by

that route certain shameful matters affecting a rival candidate will reach the *saheb.* Now, supposing that the sins of a former birth fail to checkmate all these machinations, and that the new arrival actually finds himself swimming in the unfathomed bliss of a belt with a brass plate, and a princely income of seven Queen's rupees every month, who could foretell that almost before a year has passed he will again be floundering in the mire of disappointed ambition? Yet so it is. He hears of another *Chupprassee* with only eleven months' service against his twelve, who has been promoted to eight rupees, and immediately the canker of discontent eats into his heart. Later on he finds that the cup of his happiness will never be quite full until he gets ten rupees a month, and when he has reached that giddy height, he will see dawning on his horizon the strange and beautiful hope that he may be a Naik. It is a desperate ambition—

> "He who ascends to mountain tops shall find
> The highest peaks most wrapped in clouds and snow;
> He who surpasses or subdues mankind
> Must look down on the hate of those below."

Subordinate *Chupprassees* will slight his authority, his fellow Naiks will disparage him, disappointed rivals will send in anonymous petitions accusing him of all manner of villanies of which he is not guilty, and, worse still, revealing the little briberies and oppressions of which he is not inno-

cent. But who of us learns wisdom in these matters? The Naik soon comes to feel that if justice were done to merit, he would be a Havildar. After he has attained that proud distinction, he retires to "husband out life's taper at its close" in the same old hut, amidst the same conglomerate of relations, but nephews and nieces, and grandchildren have taken the place of uncles and aunts and parents. The buffalo and the pariah dog are apparently the same. Then the whole range of official machinery is put in motion to reward his long and faithful services, and the Governor in Council grants him the maximum pension of four rupees a month, subject to the approval of the Viceroy, and he spends his few remaining days in gratitude to the Sircar. But one thing rankles in his mind. Babajee, not nearly so good-looking a fellow as himself, rose to be a Jemadar.

Ambition has, however, another more golden career for an enterprising and ingenious *Chupprassee;* for is he not the portal through which the humble petitioner may have access to the Collector, whose smile is prosperity and his frown destruction? And must not the hinges of the portal be oiled that they may open smoothly? Therefore, the inimitable Sir Ali Baba made a point of dismissing a *Chupprassee* whenever he began to grow fat, and he was wise, but in applying the rule you must have regard to the man's rank.

The belt of an ordinary peon may range from twenty to thirty inches according to length of service, promotion to a Naik's position will add about three inches, a Havildar will run to thirty-six or thirty-seven, and a Jemadar must have something crabbed in his disposition if he does not attain to forty-two inches. These are normal measurements, consistent with strict integrity as understood in the East. By the blessing of good temper and an easy life they may be slightly exceeded, but the itching palm brings on a kind of dropsy easily recognisable to the practised eye. I have seen an unjust Jemadar who might have walked with Sir John Falstaff.

JEMADAR.

Falstaff: My honest lads, I will tell you what I am about.
Pistol: Two yards, and more.

MALABAR HILL
BOMBAY

THAT DHOBIE!

I AM an amateur philosopher and amuse myself detecting essence beneath semblance and tracing the same principle running through things the outward aspect of which is widely different. I have studied the *Dhobie* in this spirit and find him to be nothing else than an example of the abnormal development, under favourable conditions, of a disposition which is not only common to humanity, but pervades the whole animal kingdom. A puppy rending slippers, a child tearing up its picture books, a mungoose killing twenty chickens to feed on one, a freethinker demolishing ancient superstitions, what are they all but *Dhobies* in embryo? Destruction is so much easier than construction, and so much more rapid and abundant in its visible results, that the devastator feels a jubilant joy in his work, of which the

tardy builder knows nothing. As the lightning scorns the oak, as the fire triumphs over the venerable pile, as the swollen river scoffs at the P. W. D., while arch after arch tumbles into its gurgling whirlpools, so the *Dhobie,* dashing your cambric and fine linen against the stones, shattering a button, fraying a hem, or rending a seam at every stroke, feels a triumphant contempt for the miserable creature whose plodding needle and thread put the garment together. This feeling is the germ from which the *Dhobie* has grown. Day after day he has stood before that great black stone and wreaked his rage upon shirt and trowser and coat, and coat and trowser and shirt. Then he has wrung them as if he were wringing the necks of poultry, and fixed them on his drying line with thorns and spikes, and finally he has taken the battered garments to his torture chamber and ploughed them with his iron, longwise and crosswise and slantwise, and dropped glowing cinders on their tenderest places. Son has followed father through countless generations in cultivating this passion for destruction, until it has become the monstrous growth which we see and shudder at in the *Dhobie.*

But I find in him, at least, an illustration of another human infirmity. He takes in hand to eradicate the dirt which defiles the garment. But the one is closely mingled with the very fibres of the other, the one is impalpable, the other bulky and substantial, and so the torrent of his

zealous rage unconsciously turns against the very substance of that which he set himself lovingly to purge and restore to its primitive purity. Indeed, I sometimes find that, while he has successfully wrecked the garment, he has overlooked the dirt! Greater and better men than the *Dhobie* are employed in the same way.

Such are the consolations of philosophy,

> "But there was never yet philosopher
> Who could endure the toothache patiently,"

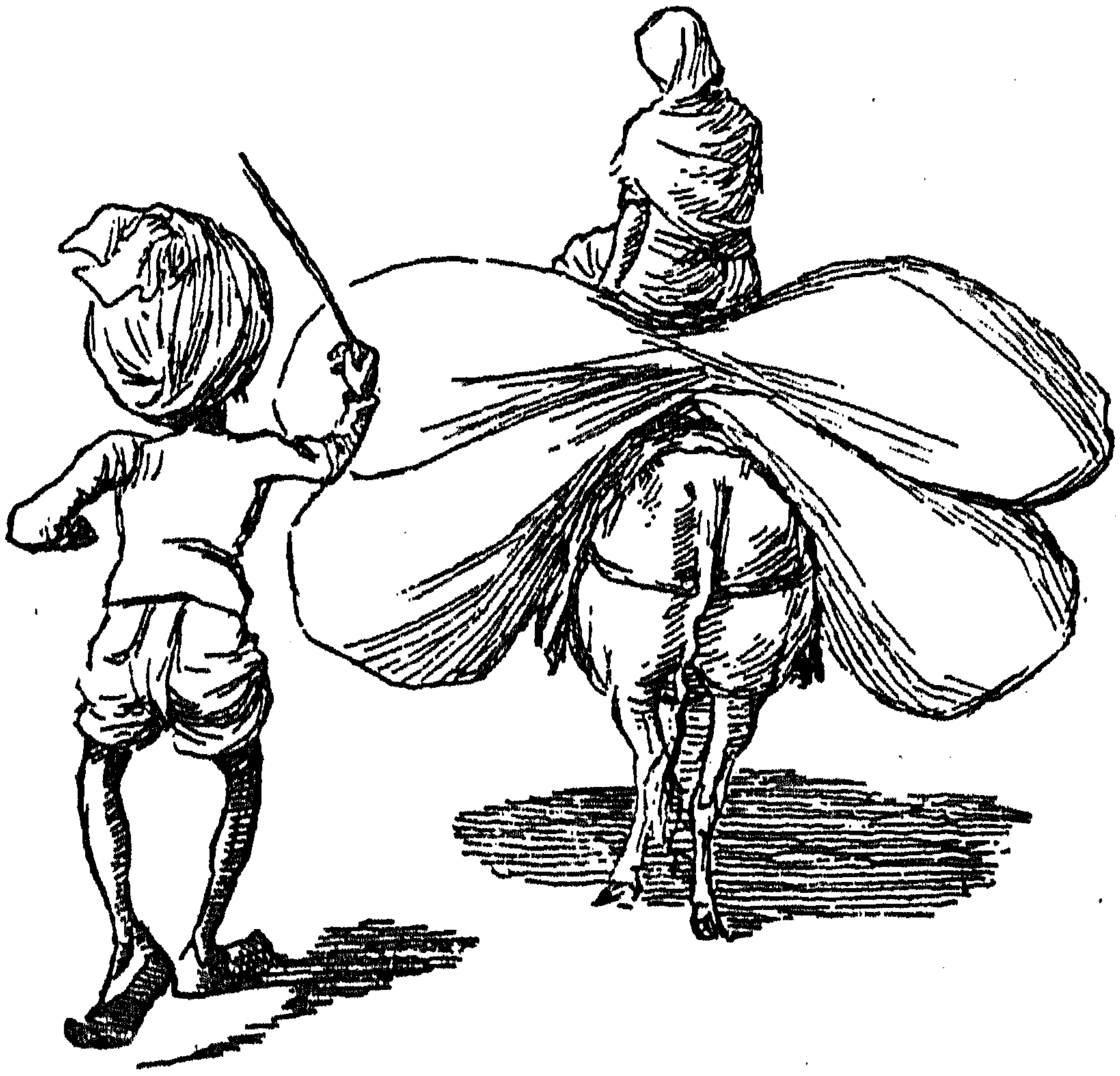
much less the *Dhobie*. He is not tolerable. Submit to him we must, since resistance is futile; but his craven spirit makes submission difficult and resignation impossible. If he had the soul of a conqueror, if he wasted you like Attilla, if he flung his iron into the clothes-basket and cried *Væ victis*, then a feeling of respect would soften the bitterness of the conquered; but he conceals his ravages like the white ant, and you are betrayed in the hour of need. When he comes in, limping and groaning under his stupendous bundle, and lays out *khamees*, *pyatloon*, and *pjama*, all so fair and decently folded, and delivers them by tale in a voice whose monotonous cadence seems to tell of some undercurrent of perennial sorrow in his life, who could guess what horrors his perfidious heart is privy to? Next morning, when you spring from your tub and shake out the great jail towel which is to wrap

your shivering person in its warm folds, lo! it yawns from end to end. There is nothing but a border, a fringe, left. You fling on your clothes in unusual haste, for it is mail day morning. The most indispensible of them all has scarcely a remnant of a button remaining. You snatch up another which seems in better condition, and scramble into it; but, in the course of the day, a cold current of wind, penetrating where it ought not, makes you aware of what your friends behind your back have noticed for some time, *viz.*, that the starch with which a gaping rent had been carefully gummed together, that you might not see it, has melted and given way. The thought of these things makes a man feel like Vesuvius on the eve of an eruption; but you must wait for relief till *Dhobie* day next week, and then the poltroon has stayed at home, and sent his brother to report that he is suffering from a severe stomachache. When the miscreant makes his next appearance in person, he stands on one leg, with joined palms and a piteous bleat, and pleads an *alibi*. He was absent about the marriage of a relation, and his brother washed the clothes. So your lava falls back into its crater, or, I am afraid, more often overflows the surrounding country.

My theory of the *Dhobie* is a mere speculation, a hypothesis deduced from broad, general principles. I do not pretend to have established it by scientific observation, and am very

tolerant towards other theories, especially one which is supported by many competent authorities, and explains the *Dhobie* by supposing a league between him, the *dirzee* and the Boy. I think a close investigation into the natural history of the shirt would go far to establish this theory as at least partially true. In spite of the spread of "Europe" shops, the shirt is still abundantly produced from the vernacular *dirzee* sitting crossed-legged in the verandah, and each shirt will be found to furnish him, on the average, with about a week's lucrative employment. From his hands it passes to the *Dhobie* and returns with the buttons wanting, the button-holes widened to great gaping fish-mouths, and the hems of the cuffs slightly frayed. The last is the most significant fact, because it leads to the discovery of one of those delicate adaptations which the student of nature has so often occasion to admire; for, on examination, we discover that the hem had been made with the least possible margin of cloth, as if to facilitate the process of fraying. As we know that economy of material is not an object with the *dirzee*, it has been maintained that there is some connection here. Next the shirt passes into the hands of the Boy, who takes his scissors and carefully pares the ragged edges of the cuffs and collar. A few rotations of *Dhobie* and Boy reduce the cuffs to the breadth of an inch, while the collar becomes a circular saw which threatens to take your head off. Then you fling

the shirt to your Boy, and the *dirzee* is in requisition again. Observation of white trousers will lead to similar results. Between *Dhobie's* fury and Boy's repairs, the ends of the legs retreat steadily upwards to your knees, and by the time the Boy inherits them they are just his length. Remember, I



HOMEWARD BOUND.

do not say I believe in this explanation of the *Dhobie.* I give it for what it is worth. The subject is interesting and practical.

Did you ever open your handkerchief with the suspicion that you had got a duster into your pocket by mistake, till the name of De Souza blazoned on the corner showed you

that you were wearing someone else's property? An accident of this kind reveals a beneficent branch of the *Dhobie's* business, one in which he comes to the relief of needy

DHOBIES.

respectability. Suppose yourself (if you can) to be Mr. Lobo, enjoying the position of first violinist in a string band which performs at Parsee weddings and on other festive

occasions. *Noblesse oblige;* you cannot evade the necessity for clean shirt-fronts, ill able as your precarious income may be to meet it. In these circumstances a *Dhobie* with good connections is what you require. He finds you in shirts of the best quality at so much an evening, and you are saved all risk and outlay of capital; you need keep no clothes except a greenish black surtout and pants and an effective necktie. In this way the wealth of the rich helps the want of the poor without their feeling it, or knowing it—an excellent arrangement. Sometimes, unfortunately, Mr. Lobo has a few clothes of his own, and then, as I have hinted, the *Dhobie* may exchange them by mistake, for he is uneducated and has much to remember; but, if you occasionally suffer in this way, you gain in another, for Mr. Lobo's family are skilful with the needle, and I have sent a torn garment to the washing which returned skilfully repaired.

I suspect I am getting bitter and ironical, and it will be wise to stop, for we are fickle creatures, the best of us, and it is quite possible that, in the mild twilight of life, in the old country, I shall find myself speaking benevolently of the *Dhobie*, and secretly wishing I could hear his plaintive monotone again counting out my linen at four rupees a hundred.

THE AYAH.

WAS ROAMING among the flower-beds and bowers of a "Peri's Paradise," known in Bombay as The Ladies' Gymkhana, when I was startled by a voice like the sound of a passionate cart-wheel screaming for grease. "Lub ob my heart," it cried, "my eshweet, don't crei! don't crei!" The owner of the voice was a woman with a negro type of countenance, as

far as I remember, but her figure has remained with me better than her face. It was a portly figure, like that of a domestic duck in high condition, and her gait was, as Mr. Onoocool Chunder Mookerjee would say, "well quadrate" to the figure. Engulphed in her voluminous embrace was a little cherub, with golden curls and blue eyes dewy with passing tears—a pretty study of sunshine and shower. The great, bare arms of the pachyderm were loaded with bangles of silver and glass, which jingled with a warlike sound as she hugged her little charge and plastered its pretty cheeks with great gurgling kisses, which made one shudder and think involuntarily of the "slime which the aspic leaves upon the caves of Nile." Many of us have been Anglo-Indian babies. Was there a time when we suffered caresses such as these? What a happy thing it is that Lethe flows over us as we emerge from infancy, and blots out all that was before. Another question has been stirring in my mind since that scene. What feeling or motive prompted those luscious blandishments? Was it simple hypocrisy? I do not think so. The pure hypocrite is much rarer than shallow people think, and, in any case, there was no inducement to make a display in my presence. What influence could I possibly exercise over the fortunes of that great female? A maternal hippopotamus in the Zoo would as soon think of hugging a young giraffe to propitiate the spectators. Of course you

may take up the position that the hypocrisy is practised all day before her mistress, and that the mere momentum of habit carries it on at other times. This is plausible, but I suspect that such a case would rather come under the fundamental law that action and reaction are equal and opposite. Let us be charitable and look for better reasons. The mere milk of human kindness explains something, but not enough, and I am inclined to think that the *Ayah* is the subject of an indiscriminate maternal emotion, which runs where it can find a channel. The effect of culture is to specialise our affections and remove us further and further from the condition of the hen whose philoprogenitiveness embraces all chicks and ducklings; so it may well be that the poor *Ayah*, who has not had much culture, is better able than you or I to feel promiscuously parental towards babies in general; at least, if she can connect them in any way with herself. Towards babies in the care of another *Ayah* she has no charity; they are the brood of a rival hen and she would like to exterminate them. Again, we must love and hate, if we live at all. The *Ayah's* horizon is not wide, her sentiments are neither numerous nor complex, and her affections are not trained to lay hold of the abstract or the historical. If you question her, you will find that her heart does not bleed for the poor negro, and she is not in the habit of regarding the Emperor Caligula with abhorrence. She has

one or two brothers or sisters, but they are far away and have become almost as historical as Caligula. In these circumstances, if she could not feel motherly towards babies, what feeling would be left to her? And, perhaps, if we knew her story, baby has a charm to open up an old channel, long since dry and choked with the sands of a desert life, in which a gentle stream of tenderness once flowed, with "flowerets of Eden" on its banks, and fertilised her poor nature. But we do not know her story. She says her husband is a cook. More about him she does not say, but she hugs "Sunny Baba" to her breast and kisses him and says that nothing shall ever part her from him till he grows to be a great *saheb*, with plenty of pay, when he will pension her and take care of her in her old age. And her eyes get moist, for she means it more or less; but next day she catches a cold and refuses food, saying that all her bones ache and her head is revolving; then the horror of dying among strangers, "unhouseled, disappointed, unaneled," proves too much for the faithful creature, and she disappears without notice, leaving her darling and its mother to look out for another *Ayah*.

It is a fortunate thing for us that the *Ayah* is able to conceive such a devouring passion for our children, for it appears, from her own statements, that but for this strong tie, nothing would induce her to stay a day in our service

where the constant broils with the other servants, into which she is driven by her determination to be faithful to her own mistress, make life almost unbearable to a peaceable woman like her. The chief object of her righteous indignation is the "Bootrail." She is so reluctant to make any personal complaint, that she would pass over his grudging her a little sugar in her morning tea, but when he takes away a whole cupful for his own children, conscience compels her to tell her mistress. She has often pointed out to him that such conduct is not right, and tried to reason with him, but he only insults her. The cook, being a notorious inebriate, plays into the "Bootrail's" hand, on condition that the latter will not tell upon him. Why did master send away the dinner last night without touching it? Because the cook was on the floor and the *matie* had to do the work. Chh! Chh! Chh! It is very shameful and makes her feel so bad. She herself is a teetotaler, as her mistress knows. That night when she was found with a pillow in her arms instead of the baby, singing to it and patting it to sleep, she had been smoking an English cheroot which a friend had given her, and, as she is accustomed only to country tobacco, it went to her head and stupefied her. Nothing would induce her to drink spirits, but the other servants are not like her. The *mussaul* is not a bad man, but the "Bootrail's" example infects him too. He barters the kerosine oil at the petty

shop round the corner for arrack. As for the *hamal,* she is tired of fighting with him. From this account of herself you will be able to infer that the *Ayah* is not a favourite with the other servants; but she is powerful, and so with oriental prudence they veil their feelings. The butler indeed, tries to be proud and risks ruin, but the *mussaul* truckles to her, and the cook, who can spoil her dinner, and has some control over her, trims between her and the butler. The *hamal* is impracticable, and the *chupprassees* adhere to the party in power for the time being.

The *Ayah* is the "society" newspaper of small stations, and is indispensable. The barber is the general newsagent, and, as we part with our beards in the morning, we learn from him all particulars of the dinner at the general's last night, and of the engagement that resulted between the pretty Missy Baba and the captain who has been so much about the house; also when the marriage is to take place, if the captain can get out of his debts, the exact amount of which Old Tom knows. He can tell us, too, the reason why she "jawaubed" him so often, being put up to it by her mother in the interests of a rival suitor, and he has authentic information as to the real grounds of the mother's change of tactics. But Old Tom is himself dependent on *Ayahs,* and there are matters beyond his range, matters which even in an Indian station cannot reach us by any male channel. They trickle

from *madam* to *Ayah*, from *Ayah* to *Ayah*, and from *Ayah* to *madam*. Thus they ooze from house to house, and we are all saved from judging our neighbours by outward appearances.

That scene in the Ladies' Gymkhana comes back and haunts me. What if the impress of those swarthy lips on that fair cheek are but an outward symbol of impressions on a mind still as fair and pure, impressions which soap and water will not purge away! Yes, it is so. The *Ayah* hangs like a black cloud over and around the infant mind, and its earliest outlooks on the world are tinted by that medium. It lies with wondering blue eyes watching the coloured toys which she dangles before it, and takes in the elements of form and colour. She pats it to sleep, and, on the borders of dream-land, those "sphere-born, harmonious sisters, voice and verse," visit it in the form of a plaintive ditty, which has for its simple burden,

> Little, little fish
> In bitter, bitter oil.
> I will not part with one of them for three pice
> and a half.

As its mind expands, new mysteries of the universe unfold themselves through the same interpreter. It learns to see through the hollowness of promises and threats before it knows the words in which they are framed. With the

knowledge of words comes the knowledge of their use as means of concealing the truth and gaining its little ends. Then the painful experience of discipline and punishment reveals the same motherly figure in the new light of a protector and comforter, and it learns to contrast her with the stern persons whom she has taught it to call pa-pa and ma-ma. When they refuse anything on which it has set its childish heart, it knows to whom to go for sympathy. She will console it and teach little artifices, by which it may evade or circumvent them. She supplies discipline of another kind, however, and the yet simple trusting mind of the little Pantheist lives in terror of papa's red-faced friend with the big stomach, who eats up ten or twelve little children every day, and of the Borah with the great box full of black ants, in which he shuts up naughty boys till the ants pick the flesh from their disobedient bones. When it goes to the bandstand, it gazes from a safe distance on the big drum, full of boys and girls who would not let their hair be combed: it hears their groans at every stroke of the terrible drumstick. Thus the religious side of the tender nature is developed, and *Ayah* is the priestess. Under the same guidance it will, as it grows older, tread paths of knowledge which its parents never trod. Whither will they lead it? We know not who never joined in the familiar chat of *Ayahs* and servants, but imagination "bodies forth

the forms of things unseen" and shudders. Let us rejoice that a merciful superstition, which regards the climate of India as deadly to European children, will step in and save the little soul. The climate would do it no harm, but there is a moral miasma more baneful than any which rises from the pestilential swamps of the Terai, or the Bombay Flats.

P. S.—I have just taken another look at our present *Ayah*. She is a little old woman from Goa, with humorous "crow's feet" at the corners of her kind eyes. She is very retiring and modest, and all the servants seem fond of her. It is evident that nature is various, and we cannot all be types.

M. R. JAYAKAR
MALABAR HILL
BOMBAY

R. R. THE PUNDIT.

THE Pundit is like duty; his cough rouses us from our beds in the morning like the voice of conscience. Why must we pass examinations? Not that we may know the language of the people, for it is matter of daily observation, that of all the mysteries which perplex the humble mind of the country bumpkin in this land, causing him to scratch his—well, not his head

there is none which he gives up as hopeless sooner than the strange sounds addressed to him by the young *saheb* who has just passed his higher standard. He joins his palms in loyal acquiescence, and asserts that the gentleman is his father and mother. It was Swift, was it not, who suggested that all high offices of state should be filled by lot, because the result would be on the whole quite as satisfactory as that obtained by the present system, while disappointed candidates would curse Fortune, who has a broader back than the Prime Minister. No doubt examinations were introduced on the same sort of principle, to act as a buffer between the train of candidates and the engine of Government. That the examination often comes after instead of before the appointment is a necessary modification, without which no room would be left for the play of those kindly feelings for kith and kin which we bitterly nickname nepotism. Under this arrangement I have known a needy *nepos* of H. E. himself provided with a salary for a whole year, till he could hold the examination at bay no longer, when he evacuated his position and retreated to his friends. Whatever the explanation of the matter may be, it falls to the lot of most of us to experience the Pundit. I may remark here that he is very commonly called a Moonshee, on the same principle on which a horse is not called a cow. The Pundit is not a Moonshee. The Moonshee is a follower of the Prophet and

teaches Oordoo, or Hindoostanee, while the Pundit is a Brahmin and instructs you in Marathee or Gujarathee. The Moonshee struggles to get you to disgorge the sound *ghain* and leads you through the enchanted mazes of the Bagh-o-Bahar; the Pundit distinguishes between the *kurmunnee* and the *kurturree prayog*, and has many knotty points of mythology to expound, in order that you may rightly understand his idioms and appreciate his proverbial sayings. Of Pundits there are three species, quite distinct from each other. The first I would recommend if your object should, by any chance, be to learn to speak the language intelligibly; but he knows no English, and you must gird yourself to work if you employ him. This sort of teacher does not suit the tastes of the present generation and is dying out, I think. The second kind is invaluable if your purpose is to pass an examination. He knows English well, dresses smartly, and is altogether a superior sort of person to the last, especially in his own estimation; but appearances are delusive, and the sign that really distinguishes him from other Pundits is that he enjoys in a high degree the esteem and confidence of a native member of the examining body. Another unfailing characteristic of him is that he requires a monstrous monthly stipend and the promise of a handsome *douceur* if you pass; but then you have the satisfaction of knowing that, if you fulfil the conditions, that happy result is certain.

His system leaves no room for failure. Some people regard this man as a myth, but I have had authentic accounts of him from numerous young gentlemen who had failed in their examinations simply, as they themselves assured me, because they did not employ him. The third class consists of young men, aspirants to University honours and others, with some knowledge of English and a laudable desire to improve it by conversation with Englishmen. I do not know for what purpose this sort of Pundit is useful.

Old Ragunath Rao belonged to the first of these three classes. He knew no English, and he desired to know none, neither English words nor English thoughts. He was an undiluted Brahmin. He had taught a former generation of Anglo-Indians, long since retired, or in their graves, and one or two of these, who were very religious men, had impressed him by their characters so deeply that he always spoke of them with reverence, as not men but divinities. The tide had ebbed away from him, and no one employed him now: he was very poor. His face was heavy, his ears like beef-steaks, with a fringe of long bristles round the edge and a bushy tuft of the same sprouting from the inside. His features were not pleasing, but strongly expressive of character, stubborn Hindoo character, self-disciplined, self-satisfied, and in a set attitude of defence against the invasions of novelty. His athletic intellect was exercised

in all manner of curious questions. The only matter about which it never concerned itself was reality, the existence of which he probably doubted. At any rate, he considered truth, right, wrong, to be subjects for speculative philosophy. As a practical man, he had minutely acquainted himself with all the things that behoved to be believed by an orthodox Brahmin, and he was not the man to give way to mere facts. This frame of mind begot in him a large tolerance, for what possible connection could there be between what it became him to believe and what it became you to believe? If his son had turned a Christian, he could have swung him from a tree by his thumbs and toes and flagellated him from below with acute pleasure; but if you expounded Christian doctrines and morals to him, he would listen with profound admiration. A Christian who lived up to his creed he respected unfeignedly. Strange old man! like one of his own idols, not modelled upon anything that is in heaven or on earth. Are they not, he and the idol, the fruit of the same tree?

What memories rise out of their graves at the mention of old Ragunath! Just about a quarter of an hour after his time he comes slowly up the steps, panting for breath, and leaving his shoes at the door, walks in with a *quasi* courtly salutation. As soon as he can recover his voice, he tells of a hair-breadth escape from sudden death. As he was crossing

the road, a carriage and pair bore down on him. He stood petrified with terror, not knowing whether to hurry forward or turn back, but just as the horses were upon him, he made a frantic effort and gained the side-walk! He infers that his time to die had not arrived, and takes the occasion to impart some information about the planets and their influence on human destinies. Then we seat ourselves, and he takes my exercise (translation from Grant Duff), and reads it slowly in a muffled voice, which is forced to make its exit by the nose, the mouth being occupied with cardamoms or betel nut. As he reads he corrects with a pencil, but gives no explanation of his corrections; for you must not expect him to teach: he is a mine simply, in which you must dig for what you want. One thing you may depend on, that whatever you extract from that mine will be worth having, indigenous treasure, current wherever Hindoo thought is moving, very different from the foreign-flavoured pabulum with which your English smattering instructor charges his feeding bottle. The exercise gives Ragunath an opportunity of digressing into some traditional incident of Maratha history which escaped the researches of Mr. Grant Duff, an incident generally in which Maratha cunning (*sagacity* he calls it) triumphed over English stupidity. After the exercise comes the inevitable petition. I do not remember the subject of it—some grievance no doubt connected with hereditary rights in land

—but it matters little; the whole document might as well be a Moabite stone recording the wars of Mesha with Jehoram, for not a letter of it stands out recognisable to my eyes. Indeed, no letter, or word either, stands out at all; the scribe seems never to have lifted his pen from his paper except for ink, and that generally in the middle of a word. However, Ragunath takes the greasy paper from my hand, remarks that the handwriting is good, and starts off reading it, or, I should say, intoning it, on exactly the same principle, *viz.*, never pausing except for breath, and that generally in the middle of a word. Then we read together the "Garland of Pearls," which he illuminates with notes of his own. Speaking of old age, he remarks that the hair of some men ripens sooner than that of others, but that our heads must all grow grey as our brains get thin. He discourses on anatomy, food, digestion, the advisability of lying down on the left side for twenty minutes after meals, and on many things in heaven and earth which are not dreamed of in our philosophy. As the morning wears on, the old man, who is not accustomed to sitting on chairs, begins to fidget, and shows signs of a desire to gather up his feet into the seat and nurse them. At last drowsiness overtakes him. His eyes are open, but his mind is asleep, and I may do as I please with grammar and idiom: even when I yawn, he omits to snap his fingers and lets the devil skip down my throat. When

he awakes he suggests that it is time to stop, and asks leave for the next day, as he has to renew his sacred thread. Poor old Ragunath! I fear he has gone long since to the burning ground on the banks of the Moota Moola.

LEARNED REPOSE.

Before we part let me give you a hint. Always keep a separate chair for your Pundit, one isolated on glass legs, if possible. Even this does not afford complete security, for he now and then detects one of the many insects which you have watched coursing up and down his white scarf, and picking it off with his finger and thumb, puts it on the floor. His creed forbids him to take the life of anything which may possibly be the corporeal habitation of the spirit of one of his deceased ancestors, but these little insects irritate him, so he deports them as we do our loafers.

HURREE, THE DIRZEE.

A WARM altercation is going on in the verandah. A little human animal, with a very large red turban on his little head, stuck full of pins and threaded needles, stands on all fours over a garment of an unmentionable kind, which I recognise as belonging to me, and a piece of cloth lies before him, out of which he has cut a figure resembling the said garment. The scissors with which the operation was performed are still lying open upon the ground before him. His head is thrown so far back that the great turban rests between his shoulder blades, his brow is corrugated with perplexity, his mouth a little open, as if his lower jaw could not quite follow the rest of his upturned face. Hurree cannot know much about toothache. What would I not give for that set of incisors, regular as the teeth of a saw, and all as red as a fresh brick! I suppose the current quid of *pan suparee* is temporarily stowed away under that swelling in the left

cheek, where the fierce black patch of whisker grows. The survival of a partial cheek pouch in some branches of the human race is a point that escaped Darwin. But I am digressing into reflections. To return: a lady is standing over

A "LEETLE SILOPE."

the quadruped and evidently expressing serious displeasure in some form of that domestic language which we call Hindoostanee, with variations. The charge she lays against him seems to be that he has, in disregard of explicit instructions and defiance of common sense, made a blunder to which her whole past experience in India furnishes no parallel, and which

has resulted in the total destruction of a whole piece of costly material, and the wreck of a garment for want of which the *saheb* (that is myself) will be put to a degree of inconvenience which cannot be estimated in rupees, and will most certainly be provoked to an outbreak of indignation too terrible to be described. So little do we know ourselves! I had no idea I harboured such a temper. However, Hurree does not tremble, but pleads that it was necessary to make the garment "leetle silope," and though he admits that the slope is too great, he thinks the mistake can be remedied, and is pulling the cloth to see if it will not stretch to the required shape. Failing this, he has other remedies of a technical kind to suggest. I do not understand these matters, and cannot interpret his argument, but he puts his fingers on the floor and flings himself lightly to the other side of the cloth, to point out where he proposes to have a "fals hame," or some other device. She rejects the proposal with scorn, and again impresses him with the consequences of his wicked blunder. At last I am glad to see that a compromise is effected, and the little man settles himself in the middle of a small carpet and locks his legs together so that his shins form an X and he sits on his feet. In this position he will ply his needle for the rest of the day at a rate inversely proportional to the distance of his mistress. When she retires for her afternoon *siesta* the needle will nap too. Then he will take out a little *Vade*

Mecum, which is never absent from his waistband, and unroll it. It is many-coloured and contains little pockets, one for fragments of the spicy areca, one for the small tin box which contains fresh lime, one for cloves, one for cardamoms, and so on. He will put a little of this and a little of that into his palm, then roll them all up in a betel leaf out of another pocket, and push the parcel into his mouth. Thus refreshed he will go to work again, not, however, upon the garment to which he is now devoted, but upon a roll of coloured stuffs on which he is at the present moment sitting. You see, times are hard and Hurree has a large family, so he is obliged to eke out his salary by contract work for the *mussaul*. His work suffers from other interruptions. When the carriage of a visitor is heard, he has to awaken the *chupprassee* on duty at the door, and on his own account he goes out to drink water at least as often as the *chupprassee* himself. As the day draws near its close, he watches the shadow like a hireling, and when it touches the foot of the long arm chair, he springs to his feet, rolls up his rags and threads into a bundle, and trips gaily out. As he does so you will observe that his legs are bandy, the knees refusing to approach each other. This is the result of the position in which he spends his days.

This is how we clothe ourselves in our Indian empire. Our smooth and comfortable *khakee* suits, our ample *pyjamas*, the cool white jackets in which we dine, in this way are

they brought about. But you must not allow yourself to think of the *Dirzee* simply as an agency for producing clothes. Life is not made up of such simplicities. The *raison d'être* of that mango tree lies without doubt in the chalice of nectar, called "mango fool," with which Domingo appeases me when he guesses that his enormities have gone beyond the limits even of my endurance; but I see that thirty-seven candidates for the place of the *chupprassee* who went on leave yesterday have encamped under its shade, that they may watch for my face in the verandah. The trespassing goat also has browsed on its leaves, and from the shelter of its branches the Magpie Robin pours that stream of song which, just before the dawning of the day, in the cloudy border land between sleeping and waking flows over my soul. But I shall never really know the place that tree has filled in my life, unless someone cuts it down and gives me a full view, from my easy chair, of the dirty brick-burners' hut, with the poisonous film of blue smoke playing over the kiln, and the family of pariah puppies below, sporting with the sun-dried remains of a fowl, which deceased in my yard and was purloined by their gaunt mother. Now let imagination blot out the *Dirzee*. Remove him from the verandah. Take up his carpet and sweep away the litter. What a strange void there is in the place! Eliminate him from a lady's day. Let nine o'clock strike, but bring no stealthy footstep to the door, no muffled voice

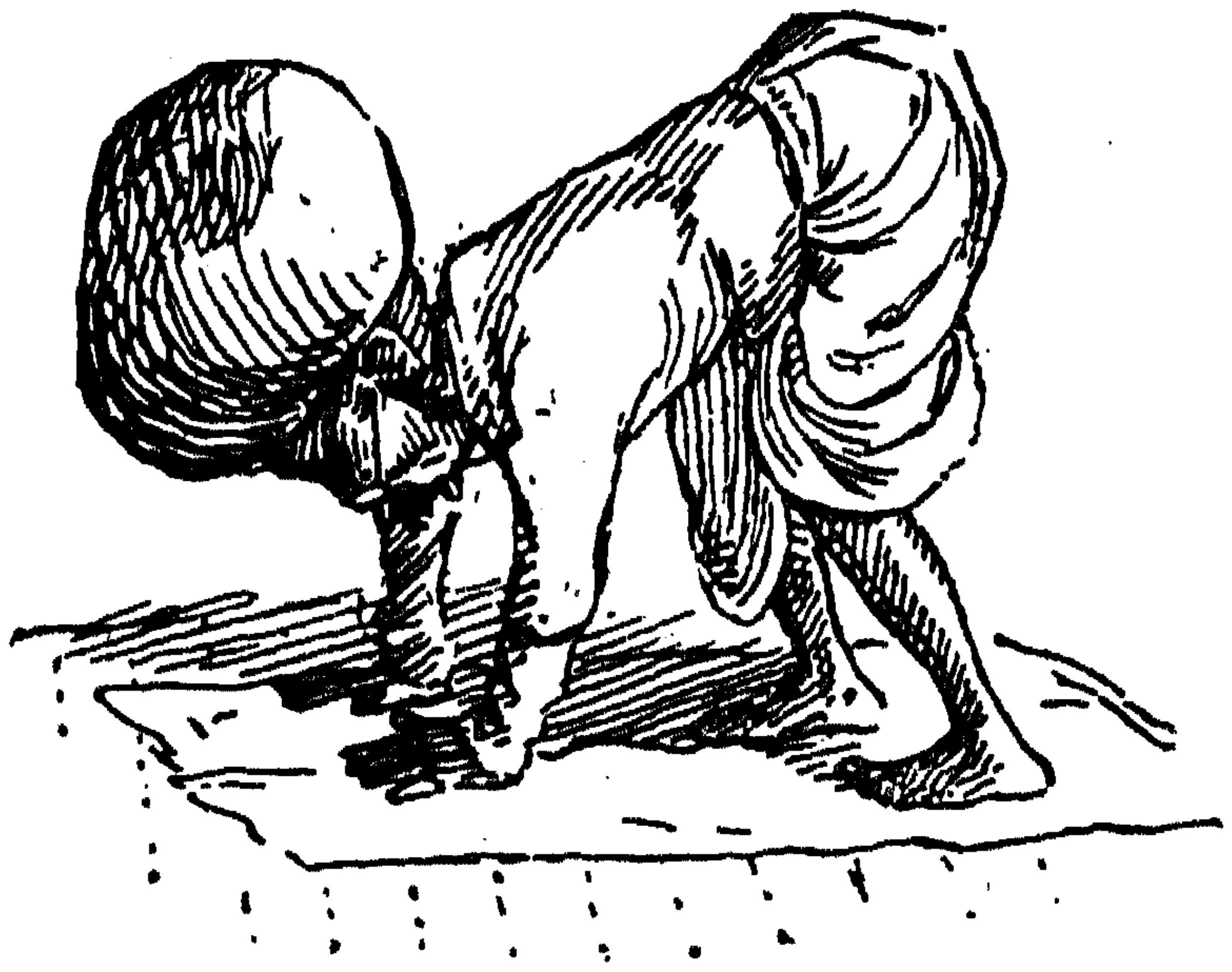
making respectful application for his *Kam.* From nine to ten breakfast will fill the breach, and you may allow another hour for the butler's account and the godown; but there is still a yawning chasm of at least two hours between eleven and tiffin. I cannot bridge it. Imagination strikes work. The joyful sound of the Borah's voice brings promise of relief; but no! for what interest can there be in the Borah if you have no *Dirzee?* In the spirit of fair play, however, I must mention that my wife does not endorse all this. On the contrary, she tells me (she has a terse way of speaking) that it is "rank bosh." She declares that the *Dirzee* is the bane of her life, that he is worse than a fly, that she cannot sit down to the piano for five minutes but he comes buzzing round for black thread, or white thread, or mother-o-pearl buttons, or hooks and eyes, that every evening for the last month he has watched her getting ready for to drive, and just as her foot was on the carriage step, has reminded her, with a cough, that his work was finished and he had nothing to do. If she could only do without him, she would send him about his business and be the happiest woman in the world, for she could devote the whole day to music and painting and the improvement of her mind. Of course I assent. That is a very commendable way of thinking about the matter. But, as an amateur philosopher, I warn you never to let yourself get under practical bondage to such notions. I tell you

when you betake yourself to music or painting, carpentry or gardening, as a means of getting through the day, you are sapping your mental constitution and shortening your life: unless you are sustained by more than ordinary littleness of mind you will never see threescore and ten. All these things are good in proportion as you have difficulty in finding time for them. When you have to rise early in the morning and work hard to make a little leisure for your favourite hobby, then you are getting its blessing. Now, the *Dirzee* is not a means of killing time. On the contrary, I see that he compels his mistress to take thought how she may save time alive, if she wishes to get anything done. He hurries the day along and scatters its hours, so that *ennui* cannot find an empty minute to lurk in. I do not deny that he is the occasion of a few provocations, and the simile of the fly is just; but are not provocations an element in the interest of every pursuit, the pepper which flavours all pleasant occupation? I collect butterflies, and my friends think I am a man to be envied because I have such a taste. Do they suppose a butterfly catcher has no provocations? Was it seventeen or seventy times (I forget) in one page that I laid down my pen, put off my spectacles and caught up my net to rush after that brute of a *Papilio polymnestor*, who just came to the *duranta* flowers to flout me and skip over the wall into the next garden? And does anyone but a butterfly hunter know how it feels to open your

cabinet drawers just a few hours after the ants have got the news that the camphor is done? Does anyone but an entomologist know the grub of *Dermestes intolerabilis?* Why should a collection of butterflies be called an object of perennial interest and delight, and the *Dirzee* an unmitigated provocation? They are both of one family. Nothing is unmitigated in this world.

Maria Graham tells us that in her time "the *Dirdjees*, or tailors, in Bombay" were "Hindoos of respectable caste," but in these days the Goanese, who has not capacity to be a butler or cook, becomes a *Dirzee*, and in Bombay I have seen Bunniah *Dirzees*. Hurree can hold his own against these, I doubt not, but the advancing tide of civilization is surely crumbling down his foundations. It is not only the "Europe" shop in Bombay that takes the bread out of his mouth, but in the smallest and most remote stations, Narayen, "Tailor, Outfitter, Milliner, and Dressmaker," hangs out his signboard, and under it pale, consumptive youths of the Shimpee caste bend over their work by lamplight, and sing the song of the shirt to the whirr-rr-rr of sewing machines. And as Hurree goes by on his way home, his prophetic soul tells him that his son will not live the happy and independent life which has fallen to his lot. But he has a bulwark still in the *dhobie*, for the "Tailor and Outfitter" will not repair frayed cuffs, and the sewing machine cannot put on buttons. And

Hurree is not ungrateful, for I observe that, when the *dhobie* delivers up your clothes in a state which requires the *Dirzee*, the *Dirzee* always gives them back in a condition which demands the *dhobie*.



M. R. JAYAKAR.
MALABAR HILL
BOMBAY
8

THE MALEE.

"Another custom is their sitting always on the ground with their knees up to their chins, which I know not how to account for."—*Daniel Johnson.*

I HAVE been watching Thomas Otway, gardener. His coat hangs on a tree hard by, and he, standing in his shirt sleeves, is slaughtering regiments of weeds with a long hoe. When they are all uprooted and prostrate, he changes his weapon for a fork, with which he tosses them about and shakes them free of soil and gathers them into

heaps. Then he brings a wheel-barrow, and, piling them into it until it can hold no more, goes off at a trot. I am told his only fault is that he is *slow.*

I have also stood watching Peelajee. He, too, is a gardener, called by his own people a *Malee,* and by us, familiarly, a *Molly.* He sits in an attitude not easy to describe, but familiar to all who have resided in the otiose East. You will get at it by sitting on your own heels and putting your knees into your armpits. In this position Peelajee can spend the day with much comfort, which is a wonderful provision of nature. At the present moment he also is engaged in the operation of weeding. In his right hand is a small species of sickle called a *koorpee,* with which he investigates the root of each weed as a snipe feels in the mud for worms; then with his left hand he pulls it out, gently shakes the earth off it, and contributes it to a small heap beside him. When he has cleared a little space round him, he moves on like a toad, without lifting himself. He enlivens his toil by exchanging remarks upon the weather as affecting the price of grain, the infirmity of my temper and other topics of personal interest, with an assistant, whom he persuaded me to engage by the day, pleading the laborious nature of this work of weeding. When two or three square yards have been cleared, they both go away, and return in half an hour with a very small basket, which one holds while the other fills it with the weeds.

Then the assistant balances it on his head, and sets out at one mile an hour for the garden gate, where he empties it on the roadside. Then he returns at the same rate, with the empty basket on his head, to Peelajee, who is occupied sitting waiting for him.

It is clear that there may be two ways of doing the same thing. I have no doubt there is much to be said for both, but, upon the whole, the advantage seems to lie with the *Malee.* Otway does as much work in a day as Peelajee does in a week. But why should a day be better than a week? If you turn the thing round, and look at the other side of it, you will find that Otway costs three shillings a day and Peelajee two rupees a week. So, if you are in a hurry, you can employ half a dozen Peelajees, and feel that you are making six families in the world happy instead of only one. And I am sure the calm and peaceful air of Peelajee, as he moves about the garden, must be good for the soul and promote longevity. I hate bustle, and I can vouch for Peelajee that he never bustles. However, there is no need of odious comparisons. There is a time for everything under the sun, and a place. Here, in India, we have need of Peelajee. He is a necessary part of the machinery by which our exile life is made to be the graceful thing it often is. I pass by bungalow after bungalow, each in its own little paradise, and look upon the green lawn successfully defying

an unkind climate, the islands of mingled foliage in profuse, confused beauty, the gay flower beds, the clean gravel paths with their trim borders, the grotto in a shady corner, where fern and moss mingle, all dripping as if from recent showers and make you feel cool in spite of all thermometers, and I say to myself, "Without the *Malee* all this would not be." Neither with the *Malee* alone would this be, but something very different. I admit that. But is not this just one secret of the beneficent influence he has on us? Your "Scotch" gardener is altogether too good. He obliterates you—reduces you to a spectator. But keeping a *Malee* draws you out, for he compels you to look after him, and if you are to look after him, you must know something about his art, and if you do not know, you must learn. So we Anglo-Indians are gardeners almost to a man, and spend many pure, happy hours with the pruning shears and the budding knife, and this we owe to the *Malee.* When I say you must look after him, I do not disparage his skill; he is neat handed and knows many things; but his taste is elementary. He has an eye for symmetry, and can take delight in squares and circles and parallel lines; but the more subtle beauties of unsymmetrical figures and curves which seem to obey no law are hid from him. He loves bright tints especially red and yellow, with a boy's love for sugar; he cannot have too much of them; but he has no organ for perceiving harmony in

colour, and so the want of it does not pain him. The chief avenue, however, by which the delights of a gardener's life reach him is the sense of smell. He revels in sweet odours; but here, too, he seeks for strength rather than what we call delicacy. In short, the enjoyment which he finds in the tones of his native *tom-tom* may be taken as typical of all his pleasures. I find however, that Peelajee understands the principles of toleration, and, recognising that he caters for my pleasure rather than his own, is quite willing to abandon his favourite yellow marigold and luscious jasmine for the *pooteena* and the *beebeena* and the *fullax.* But perhaps you do not know these flowers by their Indian names. We call them *petunia, verbena,* and *phlox.* This is, doubtless, another indication of our Aryan brotherhood.

Peelajee is industrious after the Oriental method—that is to say, he is always doing something, but is economical of energy rather than time. If there are more ways than one of doing a thing, he has an unerring instinct which guides him to choose the one that costs least trouble. He is a fatalist in philosophy, and this helps him too. For example, when he transplants a rose bush, he saves himself the trouble of digging very deep by breaking the root, for if the plant is to live it will live, and if it is to die it will die. Some plants live, he remarks, and some plants die. The second half of this aphorism is only too true. In fact, many of my best plants

not only die, but suddenly and entirely disappear. If I question Peelajee, he denies that I ever had them, and treats me as a dreamer of dreams. I would not be uncharitable, but a little suspicion, like a mouse, lurks in the crevices of my mind that Peelajee surreptitiously carries on a small business as a seedsman and nursery gardener, and I know that in his simple mind he is so identified with his master that *meum* and *tuum* blend, as it were, into one. I am restrained from probing into the matter by a sensitiveness about certain other mysteries which may be bound up with this, and about which I have always suppressed my curiosity. For example, where do the beautiful flowers which decorate my table grow? Not altogether in my garden. So much I know: more than that I think it prudent not to know. For this reason, as I said, I forbear to make close scrutiny into what may be called the undercurrent of Peelajee's operations, but I notice that he always has in hand large beds of cuttings from my best roses and crotons, and these flourish up to a certain point, after which I lose all trace of them. He says that an insidious caterpillar attacks their roots, so that they all grow black and wither away suddenly. I fall upon him and tell him that he is to blame. He protests that he cannot control underground caterpillars. He knows that I suspect, and I suspect that he knows, but a veil of dissimulation, however transparent, averts a crisis, so we fence for a time till

he understands clearly that, when he propagates my plants, he must reserve a decent number for me.

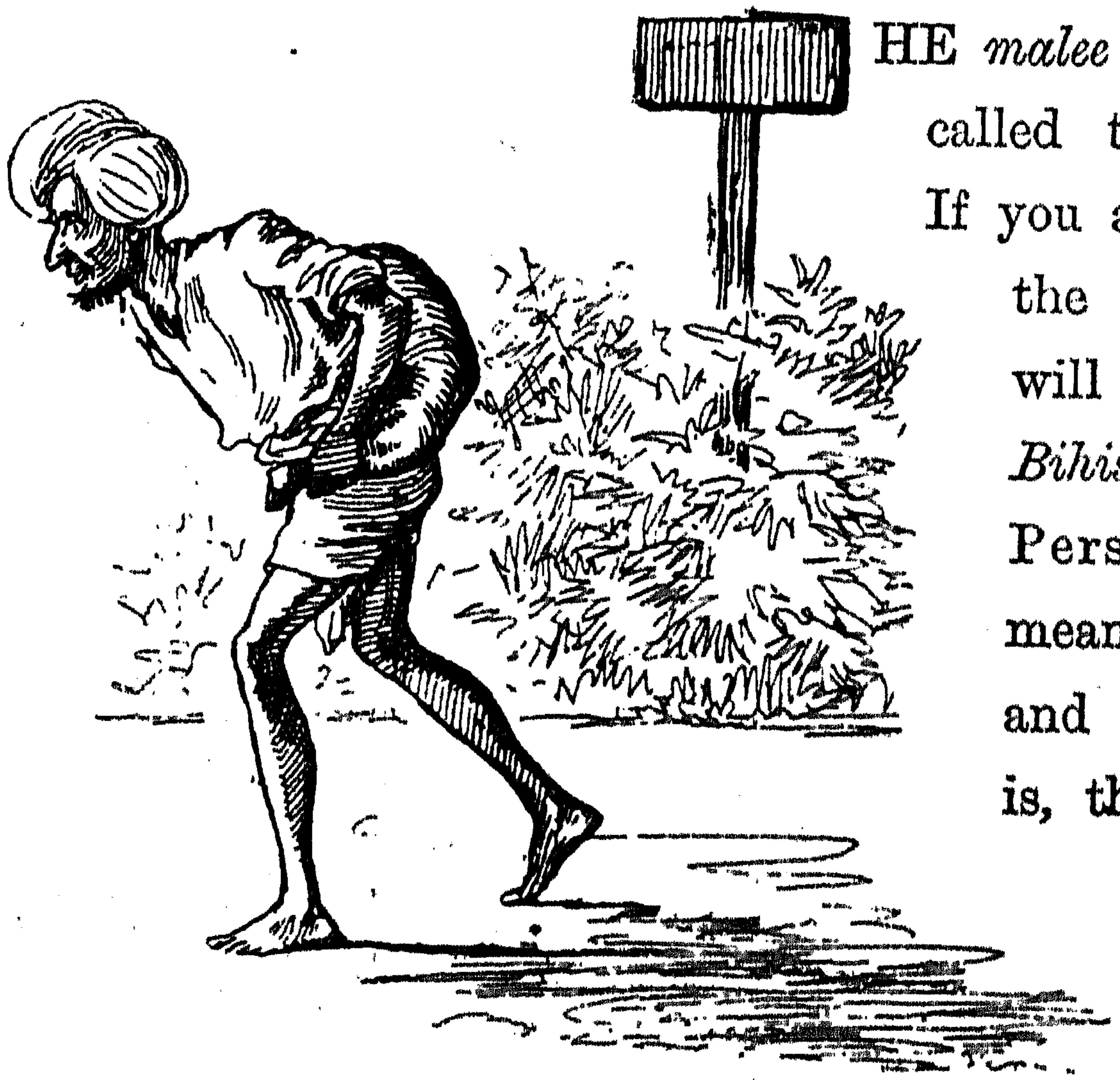
Griffins and travelling M.P.s are liable to suppose that the *Malee* is a gardener, and *ergo* that you keep him to attend to your garden. This is an error. He is a gardener, of course, but the primary use of him is to produce flowers for your table, and you need him most when you have no garden. A high-class *Malee* of good family and connections is quite independent of a garden. It seems necessary, however, that your neighbours should have gardens.

The highest branch of the *Malee's* art is the making of nosegays, from the little "buttonhole," which is equivalent to a cough on occasions when *baksheesh* seems possible, to the great valedictory or Christmas bouquet. The manner of making these is as follows. First you gather your flowers, cutting the stalks as short as possible, and tie each one firmly to an artificial stalk of thin bamboo. Then you select some large and striking flower for a centre, and range the rest round it in rings of beautiful colours. If your bull's eye is a sunflower, then you may gird it with a broad belt of red roses. Yellow marigolds may follow, then another ring of red roses, then lilac bougainvillea, then something blue, after which you may have a circle of white jasmine, and so on. Finally, you fringe the whole with green leaves, bind it together with pack thread, and tie it to the end of a short stick. If the odour

of rose, jasmine, chumpa, oleander, etc., is not sufficient, you can mix a good quantity of mignonette with the leaves on the outside, but, in any case, it is best to sprinkle the whole profusely with rose water. This will make a bouquet fit to present to a Commissioner.

THE HIGHEST STYLE OF ART.

THE BHEESTEE.



THE *malee* has an ally called the *Bheestee*. If you ask, Who is the *Bheestee?* I will tell you. *Bihisht* in the Persian tongue means Paradise, and a *Bihishtee* is, therefore, an inhabitant of Paradise, a cherub, a seraph, an angel of mercy. He has no wings; the painters have misconceived him; but his back is bowed down with the burden of a great goat-skin swollen to bursting with the elixir of life. He walks the land when the heaven above him is brass and the earth iron, when the trees and shrubs are languishing and the last blade of grass has given up the

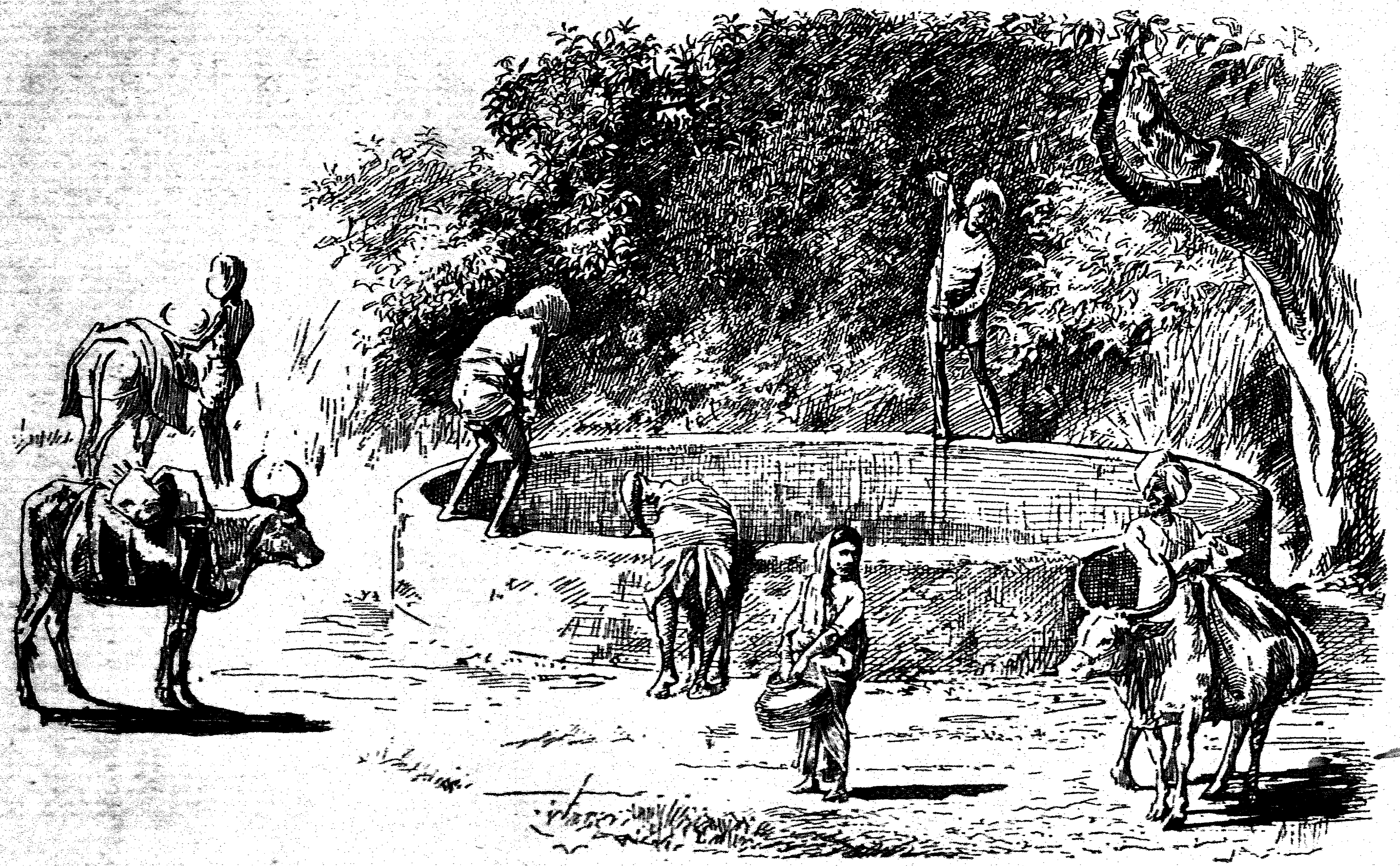
struggle for life, when the very roses smell only of dust, and all day long the roaring "dust devils" waltz about the fields, whirling leaf and grass and corn stalk round and round and up and away into the regions of the sky; and he unties a leather thong which chokes the throat of his goat-skin just where the head of the poor old goat was cut off, and straightway, with a life-reviving gurgle, the stream called *thunda panee* gushes forth, and plant and shrub lift up their heads and the garden smiles again. The dust also on the roads is laid and a grateful incense rises from the ground, the sides of the water chatty grow dark and moist and cool themselves in the hot air, and through the dripping interstices of the *khuskhus* tattie a chilly fragrance creeps into the room, causing the mercury in the thermometer to retreat from its proud place. Nay, the seraph finds his way to your very bath-room, and discharging a cataract into the great tub, leaves it heaving like the ocean after a storm. When you follow him there, you will thank that nameless poet who gave our humble Aquarius the title he bears. Surely in the world there can be no luxury like an Indian "tub" after a long march, or a morning's shooting, in the month of May. I know of none. Wallace says that to eat a *durian* is a new sensation, worth a voyage to the East to experience. "A rich, butterlike custard, highly flavoured with almonds, gives the best general idea of it, but intermingled with it come

wafts of flavour which call to mind cream cheese, onion sauce, brown sherry, and other incongruities." If this is true, then eating a *durian* must, in its way, be something like having a tub. That certainly is a new sensation. I cannot tell what gives the best general idea of it, but there are mingled with it many wafts of a vigorous enjoyment, which touch you, I think, at a higher point in your nature than cream cheese or onion sauce. There is first the enfranchisement of your steaming limbs from gaiter and shooting boot, buckskin and flannel; then the steeping of your sodden head in the pellucid depth, with bubaline snortings and expirations of satisfaction; then, as the first cold stream from the "tinpot" courses down your spine, what electric thrills start from a dozen ganglia and flush your whole nervous system with new life! Finally, there is the plunge and the wallow and the splash, with a feeling of kinship to the porpoise in its joy, under the influence of which the most silent man becomes vocal and makes the walls of the narrow *ghoosul-khana* resound with amorous, or patriotic, song. A flavour of sadness mingles here, for you must come out at last, but the ample gaol towel receives you in its warm embrace and a glow of contentment pervades your frame, which seems like a special preparation for the soothing touch of cool, clean linen, and white duck, or smooth *khakee*. And even before the voice of the butler is heard at the door, your olfactory

nerves, quickened by the tonic of the tub, have told you what he is going to say.

Some people in India always bathe in hot water, not for their sins, but because they like it. At least, so they say, and it may be true, for I have been told that you may get a taste even for drinking hot water if you keep at it long enough.

The *Bheestee* is the only one of all our servants who never asks for a rise of pay on account of the increase of his family. But he is not like the other servants. We do not think of him as one of the household. We do not know his name, and seldom or never speak to him; but I follow him about, as you would some little animal, and observe his ways. I find that he always stands on his left leg, which is like an iron gate-post, and props himself with his right. I cannot discover whether he straightens out when he goes home at night, but when visible in the daytime, he is always bowed, either under the weight of his *mussuk* or the recollection of it. The constant application of that great cold poultice must surely bring on chronic lumbago, but he does not complain. I notice, however, that his waist is always bound about with many folds of unbleached cotton cloth and other protective gear. The place to study him to advantage is the *bowrie,* or station well, in a little hollow at the foot of a hill. Of course there are many wells, but some have a bad



THE WELL.

reputation for guineaworm, and some are brackish, and some are jealously guarded by the Brahmins, who curse the *Bheestee* if he approaches, and some are for low caste people. This well is used by the station generally, and the water of it is very "sweet." Any native in the place will tell you that if you drink of this well you will always have an appetite for your meals and digest your food. It is circular and surrounded by a strong parapet wall, over which, if you peep cautiously into the dark abyss, you may catch a sight of the wary tortoise, which shares with a score or so of gigantic frogs the task of keeping the water "sweet." It was introduced for the purpose by a thoughtful *Bheestee*: the frogs fell in. Wild pigeons have their nests in holes in the sides of the well. Here, morning and evening, you will find the *Bheestees* of the station congregated, some coming and some going, like bees at the mouth of a hive, but most standing on the wall and letting down their leather buckets into the water. As they begin to haul these up again hand over hand, you will look to see them all topple head foremost into the well, but they do not as a rule. It makes an imaginative European giddy to look down into that Tartarean depth; but then the *Bheestee* is not imaginative. As the hot season advances, the water retreats further and further into the bowels of the earth, and the labour of filling the *mussuk* becomes more and more arduous. At the same time, the

demand for water increases, for man is thirsty and the ground parched. So the toils of the poor *Bheestee* march *pari passu* with the tyranny of the climate, and he grows thin and very black. Then, with the rain, his vacation begins. Happy man if his master does not cut his pay down on the ground that he has little to do. We masters sometimes do that kind of thing.

I believe the *mussuk* bearer is the true and original *Bheestee*, but in many places, as wealth and luxury have spread, he has emancipated his own back and laid his burden on the patient bullock, which walks sagaciously before him, and stops at the word of command beside each flower-pot or bush. He treats his slave kindly, hanging little bells and *cowries* about its neck. If it is refractory he does not beat it, but gently reviles its female ancestors. I like the *Bheestee* and respect him. As a man, he is temperate and contented, eating *bajree* bread and slacking his thirst with his own element. The author of Hobson Jobson says he never saw a drunken *Bheestee*. And as a servant he is laborious and faithful, rarely shirking his work, seeking it out rather. For example, we had a bottle-shaped filter of porous stoneware, standing in a bucket of water, which it was his duty to fill daily; but the good man, not content with doing his bare duty, took the plug out of the filter and filled it too! And all the station

knows how assiduously he fills the rain gauge. But what I like best in him is his love of nature. He keeps a tame lark in a very small cage, covered with dark cloth that it may sing, and early in the morning you will find him in the fields, catching grasshoppers for his little pet. I am speaking of a Mahomedan *Bheestee.* You must not expect love of nature in a Hindoo.

HIS LITTLE PET.

TOM, THE BARBER.

IN INDIA it is not good form to shave yourself. You ought to respect the religious prejudices and social institutions of the people. If everyone shaved himself, how would the Barber's stomach be filled? The pious feeling which prompts this question lies deep in the heart of Hindoo society. We do not understand it. How can we, with our cold-blooded creed of demand and supply, free trade and competition, fair field and no favour? In this ancient land, whose social system is not a deformed growth, but a finished structure, nothing has been left to chance, least of all a man's beard; for, cleanliness and godliness not being neighbours here, a beard well matted with

ashes and grease is the outward and visible sign of sanctity. And so, in the golden age, when men did everything that is wise and right, there was established a caste whose office it was to remove that sign from secular chins. How impious and revolutionary then must it be for a man who is not a barber to tamper with his own beard, thus taking the bread out of the mouths of barbers born, and blaspheming the wisdom of the ancient founders of civilization! It is true that, during the barbers' strike a few years ago, the Brahmins, even of orthodox Poona, consecrated a few of their own number to the use of the razor. But desperate diseases demand desperate remedies. When the barbers struck, Nature did not strike. Beards grew as before, and threatened to change the whole face of society. In view of such an appalling crisis who would say anything was unlawful? Besides, British rule is surely undermining the very foundations of society, and I doubt if you could find a Brahmin to-day under fifty years of age whose heart is not more or less corroded by the spirit of change. Your young University man is simply honey-combed: he can scarcely conceal his mind from his own mother or wife.

But I must return to the Barber. The natives call him *hujjam*. He has been bred so true for a score or so of centuries that shaving must be an instinct with him now. His right hand is as delicate an organ as a foxhound's nose.

I believe that, when inebriated, he goes on shaving, just as a toad deprived of its brain will walk and eat and scratch its nose. If you put a jagged piece of tin into the hand of a baby *hujjam*, he will scrape his little sister's face with it. In India, as you know, every caste has its own "points," and you can distinguish a Barber as easily as a *dhobie* or a Dorking hen. He is a sleek, fair-complexioned man, dressed in white, with an ample red turban, somewhat oval in shape, like a sugared almond. He wears large gold earrings in the upper part of his ears, and has a sort of false stomach, which, at a distance, gives him an aldermanic figure, but proves, on a nearer view, to be made of leather, and to have many compartments, filled with razors, scissors, soap, brush, comb, mirror, tweezers, earpicks, and other instruments of a more or less surgical character; for he is, indeed, a surgeon, and especially an aurist and narist. When he takes a Hindoo head into his charge, he does not confine himself to the chin or scalp, but renovates it all over. The happy patient enjoys the operation, sitting proudly in a public place. When a

A HAPPY PATIENT.

Barber devotes himself to European heads he rises in the social scale. If he has any real talent for his profession, he soon rises to the rank and title of Tom, and may eventually be presented with a small hot-water jug, bearing an inscription to the effect that it is a token of the respect and esteem in which he was held by the officers of the —th Regiment at the station of Daree-nai-hona. This is equivalent to a C. I. E., but is earned by merit. In truth, Tom is a great institution. He opens the day along with tea and hot toast and the *Daree-nai-hona Chronicle*, but we throw aside the *Chronicle.* It is all very well if you want to know which band will play at the band-stand this evening, and the leading columns are occasionally excruciatingly good, when a literary corporal of the Fusiliers discusses the political horizon, or unmasks the *Herald*, pointing out with the most pungent sarcasm how "our virtuous contemporary puts his hands in his breeches pockets, like a crocodile, and sheds tears;" but during the parade season the corporal writes little, and articles by the regular staff, upon the height to which cantonment hedges should be allowed to grow, are apt to be dull. For news we depend on Tom. He appears reticent at first, but be patient. Let him put the soap on, and then tap him gently.

"Well, Tom, what news this morning?"

"No news, sar." After a long pause, "Commissioner Saheb coming to-morrow."

"To-morrow? No, he is not coming for three weeks."

"To-morrow coming. Not telling anybody; quietly coming."

"Why?"

"God knows." After another pause, "Nana Shett give Mamletdar 500 rupee for not send his son to prison. Then Nana Shett's brother he fight with Nana Shett, so he write letter to Commissioner and tell him you come quietly and make inquire."

"The Mamletdar has been taking bribes, has he?"

"Everybody taking. Fouzdar take 200 rupee, Dipooty take 500 rupee."

"What! Does the Deputy Collector take bribes?"

"God knows. Black man very bad. All black man same like bad."

"Then are you not a black man?"

Tom smiles pleasantly and makes a fresh start.

"Colonel Saheb's madam got baby."

"Is it a boy or a girl?"

"Girl, sar. Colonel Saheb very angry."

"Why?"

"He say, 'I want boy. Why always girl coming?' Get very angry. Beat butler with stick."

Yes, Tom is a great institution. Who can estimate how much we owe to him for the circulation of that lively interest in one another's well-being which characterises the

little station? Tom comes, like the Pundit, in the morning, but he is different from the Pundit and we welcome him. He is not a shadow of the black examination-cloud which lowers over us. There is no flavour of grammars and dictionaries about him. Even if he finds you still in bed, conscience gets no support from him. He does not awaken you, but slips in with noiseless tread, lifts the mosquito curtains, proceeds with his duty and departs, leaving no token but a gentle dream about the cat which came and licked your cheeks and chin with its soft, warm tongue, and scratched you playfully with its claws, while a cold frog, embracing your nose, looked on and smiled a froggy smile. The barber's hand *is* cold and clammy. *Chacun à son gout.* I do not like him. I grow my beard, and Tom looks at me as the Chaplain regards dissenters.

TOM, THE BARBER.

OUR "NOWKERS"—THE MARCH PAST.

NOW it is time to close our inspection and order a march past. I think I have marshalled the whole force. It may seem a small band to you, if you have lived in imperial Bengal, for we of Bombay do not generally keep a special attendant to fill and light our pipe, and our *tatoo* does not require a man to cut its grass. Some of us even put on our

own clothes. In short, we have not carried the art of living to such oriental perfection as prevails on the other side of India, and a man of simple tastes will find my company of fourteen a sufficient staff. There they are, *Sub hazir hai*, "they are all present," the butler says, except one humble, but necessary officer, who does not like to appear. He is known familiarly by many names. You may call him Plantagenet, for his emblem is the lowly broom; but since his modesty keeps him in the background, we will leave him there. The rest are before you, the faithful corps with whose help we transact our exile life. You may look at them from many standpoints, and how much depends on which you take! I suspect the commonest with us masters is that which regards boy, butler, *mussaul*, cook, as just so many synonyms for channels by which the hard-earned rupee, which is our life-blood, flows from us continually. This view puts enmity between us and them, between our interests and theirs. It does not come into our minds, that when we submit our claim for an extra allowance of Rs. 200 under section 1735 of the Code, and the *mussaul* gets the butler to prefer a humble request for an increase of one rupee a month to his slender *puggar*, we and the *mussaul* are made kin by that one touch of nature. We spurn the request and urge the claim, with equal wonderment at the effrontery of *mussauls* and the meanness of Governments. And "the angels weep."

Shift your standpoint, and in each cringing menial you will see a black token of that Asiatic metamorphosis through which we all have passed. What a picture! Look at yourself as you stand there in purple sublimity, trailing clouds of darkness from the middle ages whence you come, planting your imperial foot on all the manly traditions of your own free country, and pleased with the grovelling adulations of your trembling serfs. And now it is not the angels who weep, but the Baboo of Bengal. His pale and earnest brow is furrowed with despair as he turns from you. For whither shall he turn? When his bosom palpitates with the intense joy of newborn aspirations for liberty, to whom shall he go if the Briton, the champion of the world's freedom, has drunk of Comus's cup and become an oriental satrap? Ah! there is still hope. The "large heart of England" beats still for him. In the land of John Hampden and Labouchere there are thousands yet untainted by the plague, who keep no servant, who will listen to the Baboo while he tells them about you, and perhaps return him to parliament.

There is a third view of the case, fraught with much content to those who can take it, and, happily, it is the only view possible to the primitive intelligences over which we exercise domestic lordship. In this view they are, indeed, as we regard them—so many channels by which the rupee may flow from us; but what are we, if not great reservoirs, built

to feed those very channels? And so, with that "sweet reasonableness" which is so pleasant a feature of the Hindoo mind, your boy or butler, being the main conduit, sets himself to estimate the capacity of the reservoir, that he may adapt the gauge of each pipe and regulate the flow. And, as the reservoir grows greater, as the assistant becomes a collector and the collector a commissioner, the pipes are extended and enlarged, and all rejoice together. The moral beauty of this view of the situation grows upon you as you accustom your mind to dwell on it. Is it not pleasant to think of yourself as a beneficent irrigation work, watering a wide expanse of green pasture and smiling corn, or as a well in a happy garden, diffusing life and bloom? Look at the syce's children. Phil Robinson says there are nine of them, all about the same age and dressed in the same nakedness. As they squat together there, indulging "the first and purest of our instincts" in the mud or dust of the narrow back road, reflect that their tender roots are nourished by a thin rivulet of rupees which flows from you. If you dried up, they would droop and perhaps die. The butler has a bright little boy, who goes to school every day in a red velvet cap and print jacket, with a small slate in his hand, and hopes one day to climb higher in the word than his father. His tendrils are wrapped about your salary. Nay, you may widen the range of your thoughts: the old hut in the environs of Surat, with

its patch of field and the giant gourds, acknowledges you, and a small stream, diverted from one of the channels which you supply, is filling a deep cistern in one of the back streets of Goa. Pardon me if I think that the untutored Indian's thought is better even for us than any which we have framed for ourselves. Imagine yourself as a sportsman, spear in hand, pursuing the wild V.C. through fire and water, or patiently stalking the wary K.C.B., or laying snares for the gentle C.I.E.; or else as a humble industrious dormouse lining a warm nest for the winter of your life in Bath or Tunbridge Wells; or as a gay butterfly flitting from flower to flower while the sunshine of your brief day may last; or simply as a prisoner toiling at the treadmill because you must: the well in the garden is a pleasanter conception than all these and wholesomer. Foster it while you may. Now that India has wakened up and begun to spin after the rest of the great world down the ringing grooves of change, these tints of dawn will soon fade away, and in the light of noon the instructed Aryan will learn to see and deplore the monstrous inequalities in the distribution of wealth. He will come to understand the essential equality of all men, and the real nature of the contract which subsists between master and servant. Yes, I am afraid the day is fast drawing near when you will no longer venture to cut the *hamal's* pay for letting mosquitoes into your bed curtains

and he will no longer join his palms and call you his father and mother for doing so. What a splendid capacity for obedience there is in this ancient people! And our relations with them have certainly taught us again how to govern, which is one of the forgotten arts in the West. Where in the world to-day is there a land so governed as this Indian Empire?

And now each man wants his "character" before he makes his last *salaam*, and what shall I say? "The bearer——has been in my service since——and I have always found him——" So far good; but what next? Honest?—Yes. Willing?—Certainly. Careful?—Very. Hardworking?—Well, I have often told him that he was a lazy scoundrel, and that he might easily take a lesson in activity from the *bheestee's* bullock, and perhaps I spoke the truth. But, after all, he gets up in the morning an hour before me, and eats his dinner after I have retired for the night. He gets no Saturday half-holiday, and my Sabbath is to him as the other days of the week. And so the hard things I have said of him and to him are forgotten, and charity triumphs at the last. And when my furlough is over and I return to these shores, the whole troop will be at the Apollo Bunder, waiting to welcome back their old master and eat his salt again.

M. R. JAYAKAR
MALABAR HILL
BOMBAY

POSTSCRIPT.

THE GOWLEE, OR DOODWALLAH.

GOPAL, the *Gowlee*, haunts me in my dreams, complaining that he has been left out in the cold. I had classed him with the *borah* and the baker, as outsiders with whom I had merely business relations; but Gopal seems to

urge that he is not on the same footing with these. How can he be compared to a mercenary *borah?* Has he not ministered to my wants, morning and evening, in wet weather and dry? Have not my children grown up on his milk? He will not deny that they have eaten the baker's bread too; but who is the baker? Does he come into the *saheb's* presence in person as Gopal does? No. He sits in his shop and sends a servant. Not so Gopal. He is one of my children, and I am his father and mother. And I am forced to admit there is some truth in this view of the case. The ill-favoured man who haunts my house of a morning, with a large basket of loaves poised slantwise on his head, and converses in a strange nasal brogue with the cook, is not Mr. de Souza, "baker of superior first and second sort bread, and manufacturer of every kind of biscuit, cake," &c., but a mere underling. My intercourse with the head of the firm is confined to the first day of each month, when he waits on me in person, dressed in a smart black jacket, and presents his bill. Also on Good Friday he sends me a cake and his compliments, but the former, if it is not intercepted by the butler and applied to his own uses, is generally too unctuous for my taste. Very different are our relations with the *Doodwallah.* Our *chota hazree* waits for him in the morning; our afternoon tea cannot proceed till he comes; the baby cries if the *Doodwallah* is late. And even if you are one of the few who

strike for independence and keep their own cow, I still counsel you to maintain amicable relations with the *Dood-wallah*. One day the cow will kick and refuse to be milked, and the butler will come to you with a troubled countenance. It is a grave case and demands professional skill. The *Dood-wallah* must be sent for to milk the cow. In many other ways, too, we are made to feel our dependence on him. I believe we rarely die of cholera, or typhoid fever, without his unobtrusive assistance. And all his services are performed in person, not through any underling. That stately man who walks up the garden path morning and evening, erect as a betel-nut palm, with a tiara of graduated milk-pots on his head, and driving a snorting buffalo before him, is Gopal himself. Scarcely any other figure in the compound impresses me in the same way as his. It is altogether Eastern in its simple dignity, and symbolically it is eloquent. The buffalo represents absolute milk and the lessening pyramid of brass *lotas*, from the great two-gallon vessel at the base to the ¼-seer measure at the top, stand for successive degrees of dilution with that pure element which runs in the roadside ditches after rain. Thus his insignia interpret themselves to me. Gopal does not acknowledge my heraldry, but explains that the lowest *lota* contains butter milk—that is to say, milk for making butter. The second contains milk which is excellent for drinking, but will not yield butter; the third a

cheaper quality of milk for puddings, and so on. If you are an anxious mother, or a fastidious bachelor, and none of these will please you, then he brings the buffalo to the door and milks it in your presence. I think the truth which underlies the two ways of putting the thing is the same: Gopal

THE DOODWALLAHS—MILKMEN.

and I differ in form of words only. However that may be, practice is more than theory, and I stipulate for milk for all purposes from the lowest *lota*—that is, milk which is warranted to yield butter. If it will not stand that test, I reject it. Gopal wonders at my extravagance, but consents. The milk is good and the butter from it plentiful. But as

time goes on the latter declines both in quantity and quality, so gradually that suspicion is scarcely awakened. When at last you summon the butler to a consultation, he suggests that the weather has been too hot for successful butter making, or too cold. If these reasons do not satisfy you, he has others; if they fail, he gives his verdict against the *Doodwallah*. Next morning Gopal is called to superintend the making of the butter and convicted, convicted but not abashed. He expresses the greatest regret, but blames the buffalo; its calf is too old. To-morrow you shall have the produce of another buffalo. So next day you have the satisfaction of seeing a fine healthy pat of butter swimming in the butter dish, carved and curled with all the butler's art, like a full-blown dahlia. But the milk in your tea does not improve, for Gopal, after ascertaining how much milk you set aside for butter every day, finds that the new buffalo yields only that quantity, and so what you require for other purposes comes from another source. The butler forgot to tell you this. What bond is there between him and honest Gopal? I cannot tell. Many are the mysteries of house-keeping in India, and puzzling its problems. If you could behead your butler when anything went wrong, I have very little doubt everything would go right, but the complicated methods of modern justice are no match for the subtleties of Indian petty wickedness. And yet under this crust of

cunning there is a vein of simple stupidity which constantly crops up where you least expect it. I remember a gentleman, a bachelor, who set before himself a very high standard. He would be strictly just and justly strict. He suspected that his milk was watered, but his faithful boy protested that this could not be, as the milking was begun and finished in his presence. So the master provided himself with a lactometer, and the suspicion became certainty. Summoning his boy into his presence, he explained to him that that little instrument, which he saw floating in the so-called milk before him, could neither lie nor be deceived. "It declares," he added sternly, "that there is twenty-five per cent. of water in this milk." "Your lordship speaks the truth," answered the faithful man, "but how could I tell a lie? The milk was drawn in my presence." "Do you mean to say you were there the whole time the animal was being milked?" "The whole time, your lordship. Would I give those rogues the chance of watering the *saheb's* milk?" The master thought for a moment, and asked again, "Are you sure there was no water in the pail before the milking began?—these people are very cunning." "They are as cunning as *sheitan*, your lordship, but I made the man turn the pail upside down and shake it." Again the master turned the matter over in his just mind, and it occurred to him that the lactometer was of English manufacture and might be puzzled by the milk of

the buffalo. "Is this cow's milk, or buffalo's?" he asked. The boy was beginning to feel his position uncomfortable and caught at this chance of escape. "Ah! that I cannot tell. It may be buffalo's milk." *Tableau.*

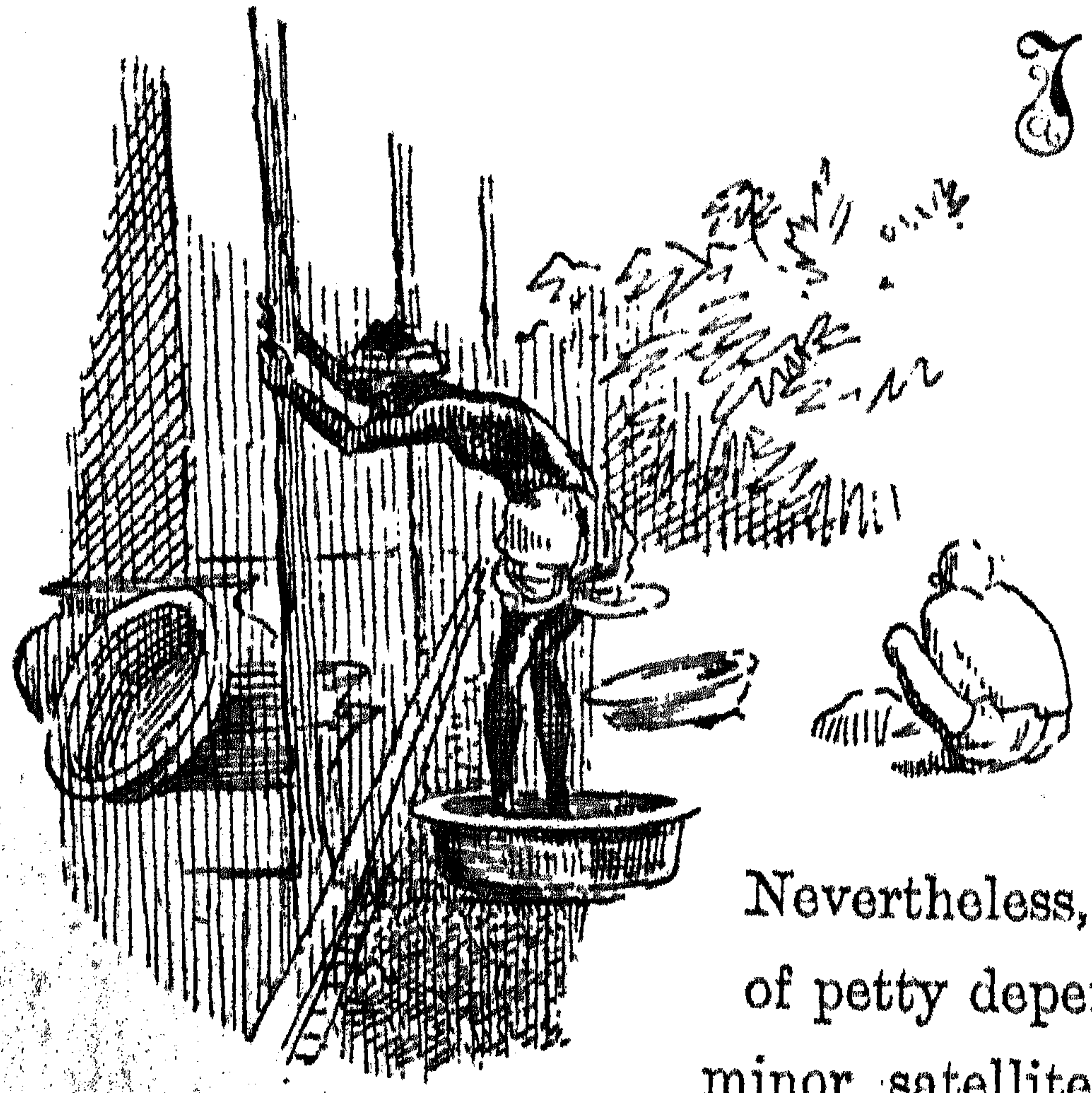
I have spoken of having butter made in the house, but Gopal carries on all departments of a dairyman's business. and you may buy butter of him at two annas a "cope." Let philologists settle the derivation of the word. The "cope" is a measure like a small tea-cup, and when Gopal has filled it, he presses the butter well down with his hand, so that a man skilled in palmistry may read the honest milkman's fortune off any cope of his butter. How he makes it, or of what materials, I dare not say. Many flavours mingle in it, some familiar enough, some unknown to me. Its texture varies too. Sometimes it is pasty, sometimes semi-fluid, sometimes sticky, following the knife. In colour it is bluish-white, unless dyed. All things considered, I refuse Gopal's butter, and have mine made at home. The process is very simple, and no churn is needed. Every morning the milk for next day's butter is put into a large flat dish, to stand for twenty-four hours, at the end of which time, if the dish is as dirty as it should be, the milk has curdled. Then, with a tin spoon, Mukkun skims off the cream and puts it into a large pickle bottle, and squatting on the ground, *more suo,* bumps the bottle upon a pad until the butter is made. The artistic

work of preparing it for presentation remains. First it is dyed yellow with a certain seed, that it may please the *saheb's* taste, for buffalo butter is quite white, and you know it is an axiom in India that cow's milk does not yield butter. Then Mukkun takes a little bamboo instrument and patiently works the butter into a "flower" and sends it to breakfast floating in cold water.

Gopal is a man of substance, owning many buffaloes and immensely fat Guzerat cows, with prodigious humps and large pendent ears. His family, having been connected for many generations with the sacred animal, he enjoys a certain consciousness of moral respectability, like a man whose uncles are deans or canons. In my mind, he is always associated rather with his buffaloes, those great, unwieldy, hairless, slate-coloured, docile, intelligent antediluvians.

HOME BUTTER MAKING.

THE MISCELLANEOUS WALLAHS.

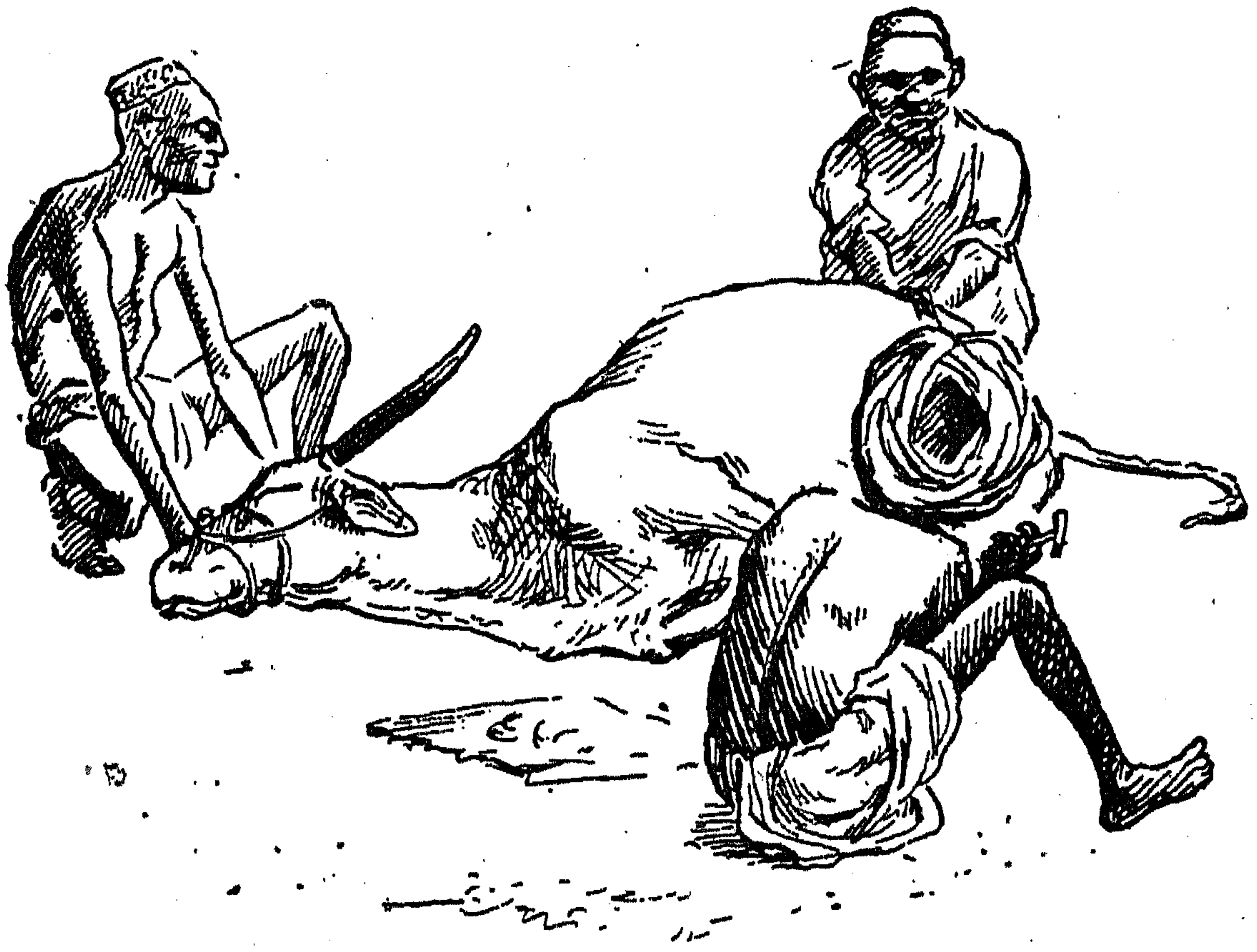


I HAVE yielded to the claim of the *doodwallah* to be reckoned among the *nowkers.* His right is more than doubtful, and I will yield no further. Nevertheless, there is a cluster of petty dependents, a nebula of minor satellites, which have us for the focus of their orbit, and which cannot be left out of a comprehensive account of our system. Whence, for example, is that raucus stridulation which sets every tooth on edge and sends a rheumatic shiver up my spine? "It is only the *Kalai-wallah,*" says the boy, and points to a muscular black man, very nearly in the garb of a Grecian athlete, standing with both feet in one of my largest cooking pots. He grasps

a post with both hands, and swings his whole frame fiercely from side to side with a circular motion, like the balance wheel of a watch. He seems to have a rough cloth and sand under his feet, so I suppose this is only his energetic way of scouring the pot preparatory to tinning it, for the *Kalai-wallah* is the "tin-man," whose beneficent office it is to avert death by verdigris and salts of copper from you and your family. His assistant, a semi-nude, fleshless youth, has already extemporized a furnace of clay in the ground hard by, and is working a huge pair of clumsy bellows. Around him are all manner of copper kitchen utensils, *handies,* or *deckshies,* kettles, frying-pans, and what not, and there are also on the ground some rings of *kalai,* commonly called tin; but pure tin is an expensive metal, and I do not think it is any part of the *Kalai-wallah's* care to see that you are not poisoned with lead. One notable peculiarity there is in this *Kalai-wallah,* or tin-man, which deserves record, namely, that he pays no *dustooree* to any man. I take it as sufficient evidence of this fact that, though even the *matie* could tell you that the pots ought to be tinned once a month, neither the butler nor the cook ever seems to remember when the day comes round. This is a matter which you must see to personally. Contrast with this the case of the *Nalbund,* the clink of whose hammer in the early morning tells that the 15th of the month has dawned. His portable anvil is

already in the ground, and he is hammering the shoes into shape after a fashion; but he is not very particular about this, for if the shoe does not fit the hoof he can always cut the hoof to fit the shoe. This is an advantage which the maker of shoes for human feet does not enjoy, though I have heard of very fashionable ladies who secretly have one toe amputated that the rest may more easily be squeezed into that curious pointed thing, which, by some mysterious process of mind, is regarded as an elegant shoe. But this is by the way. To return to the *Nalbund*. His work is guaranteed to last one calendar month, and your faithful *ghorawallah*, who remembers nothing else, and scarcely knows the day of the week, bears in mind the exact date on which the horse has to be shod next, and if the careless *Nalbund* does not appear, promptly goes in search of him. Does not this speak volumes for the efficiency of that venerable and wonderful institution *dustooree*, by which the interests of all classes are cemented together and the wheels of the social system are oiled? The shoeing of the bullock is generally a distinct profession, I believe, from the shoeing of the horse, and is not considered such a high art. The poor *byle* is thrown, and, his feet being tied together, the assistant holds his nose to the ground, while the master nails a small slip of bad iron to each half of the hoof. I often stop on my way to contemplate this spectacle, which beautifully illustrates that cold

patience, or natural thick-skinnedness, which fits the *byle* so admirably for his lot in this land. He is yoked to a creaking cart and prodded with a sharp nail to make him go, his female ancestry reviled to the third generation, his belly tickled with the driver's toes, and his tail twisted till the joints



NALBUND.

crack, but he plods patiently on till he feels disposed to stop, and then he lies down and takes with an even mind such cudgelling as the enraged driver can inflict. At last a fire of straw is lighted under him, and then he gets up and goes on. He never grows restive or frets, as a horse would, and so he does not wear out. This is the reason why bullocks are used throughout India for all agricultural purposes. The horse does

not suit the genius of the people. I wish horses in India could do without shoes. In sandy districts, like Guzerat, they can, and are much better unshod; but in the stony Deccan some protection is absolutely necessary, and the poor beast is often at the mercy of the village bullock *Nalbund*. It carries my thoughts to the days of our forefathers, when the blacksmith was also the dentist.

GHASSWALLAH.

The *Nalbund* leads naturally to the *Ghass-wallah*, or grass-man, whose sign is a mountain of green stuff, which comes nodding in at the back gate every day upon four emaciated legs. A small pony's nose protrudes from the front, with a muzzle on, for in such matters the spirit of the law of Moses is not current in this country. The mild Hindoo does muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn. His religion forbids him to take life, and he obeys, but he steers as near to that sin as he can, without actually committing it, and vitality is seen here at a lower ebb, perhaps, than in any other country under the sun. The grassman maintains just so much flesh on the bones of

his beast as will suffice to hold them together under their burden, and this can be done without lucerne grass, so poor Tantalus toddles about, buried under a pile of sweet-scented, fresh, green herbage, ministering to the sleek aristocracy of his own kind, and returns to gnaw his daily allowance of *kurbee.* There is, however, one alleviation of his lot for which he may well be thankful, and that is that his burden so encompasses him about that the stick of his driver cannot get at any part of him. I believe the *Ghasswallah* is an institution peculiar to our presidency—this kind of *Ghasswallah*, I mean, who is properly a farmer, owning large well-irrigated fields of lucerne grass. Hay is supplied by another kind of *Ghasswallah,* who does not keep a pony, but brings the daily allowance on his head. That allowance is five *polees* for each horse. A *polee* is a bundle of grass about as thick as a tree, and as long as a bit of string. This hay merchant does a large business, and used to send in a monthly bill to each of his constituents in due form, thus:—

To Hurree Ganesh, *January.*

Mr. Esmith, Esquire *Dr.*

To supplying grass to one horse	Rs.	7	0	0
Ditto to ½ horse	,,	3	8	0
Total . .	Rs.	10	8	0

E. E. & contents received.

The ½ horse was a cow.

As the monsoon draws to a close and the weather begins to get colder, a man in a tight brown suit and leather belt, with an unmistakable flavour of sport about him, presents himself at the door. This is the *shikaree* come with *khubber* of "*ishnap*," and quail, and duck, and in fact of anything you like up to bison and tiger. But we must dismiss him to-day. He would require a chapter to himself, and would take me over ground quite outside of my present scope. What a *loocha* he is!

SHIKAREE.

What shall I say of the *Roteewallah* and the *Jooteewallah*, who comes round so regularly to keep your boots and shoes in disrepair, and of all the vociferous tribe of *borahs*? There is the *Kupprawallah*, and the *Boxwallah*, and the *Ready-made-clotheswallah* ("readee made cloes, mem sa-ab! dressin' gown, badee, petticoat, drars, chamees, everyting, mem sa-ab, very che-eap!") and the *Chowchowwallah* and the *Maiwa-wallah* or fruit man, with his pleasant basket of pomeloes and oranges, plantains, red and white, custard apples,

READY-MADE-CLOTHES WALLAH.

guavas, figs, grapes, and pineapples, and those suspicious-looking old iron scales, hanging by greasy, knotted strings. Each of these good people, it seems, lives in this hard world for no other end but to supply my wants. One of them is positive that he supplied my father with the

SINDWORKWALLAH.

COOLIE.

necessaries of life before I was born. He is by appearance about eighteen years of age, but this presents no difficulty, for if it was not he who ministered to my parent, it was his father, and so he has not only a personal, but a hereditary claim on me. He is a *workboxwallah*, and is yearning to show

that red-liveried man as Noah felt towards the dove with the olive branch in her mouth. And when Christmas comes round, howsoever we may harden ourselves against others, scarcely one of us, I know, will grudge a rupee to the *tapal-wallah*.

M. R. JAYAKAR
MALABAR HILL

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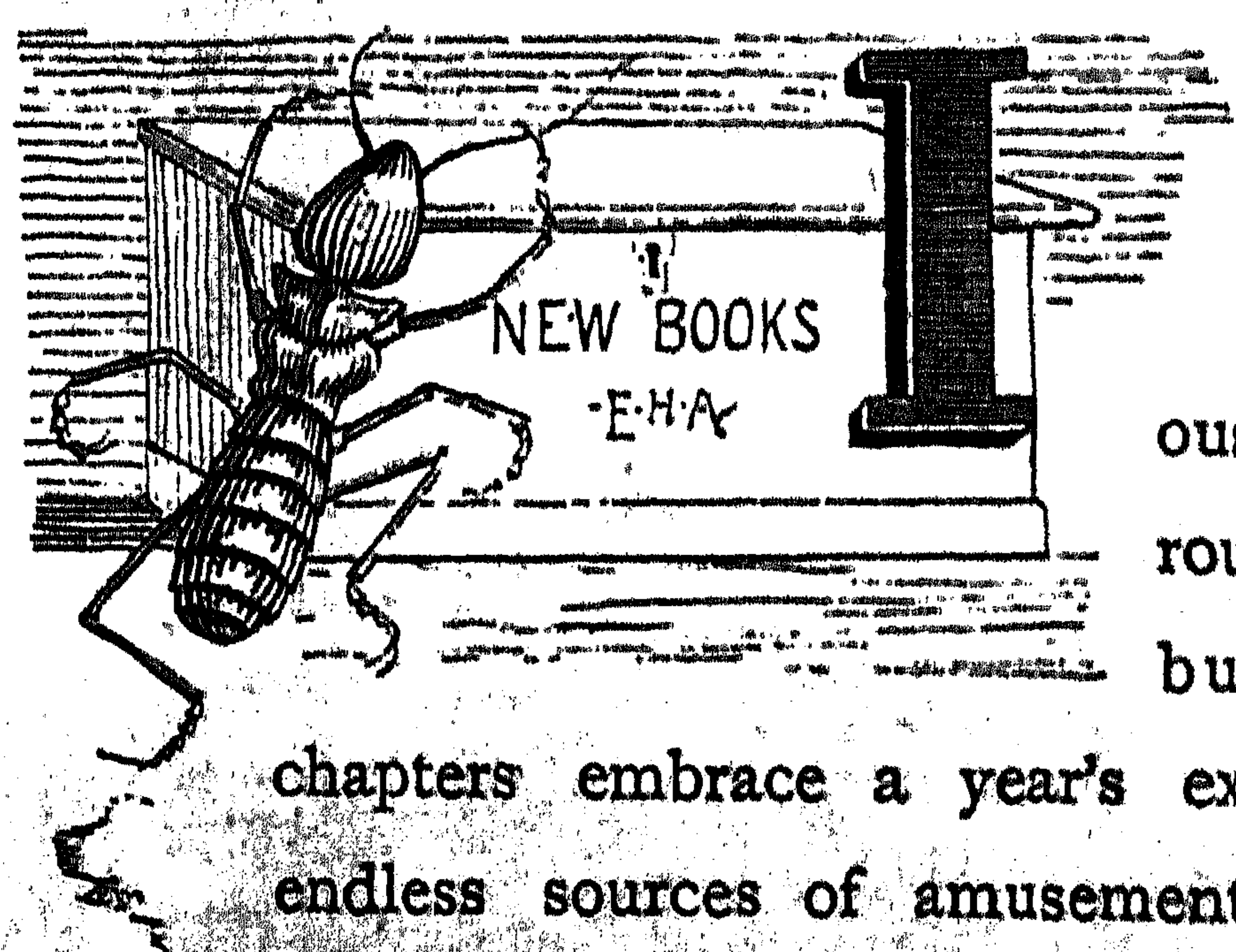

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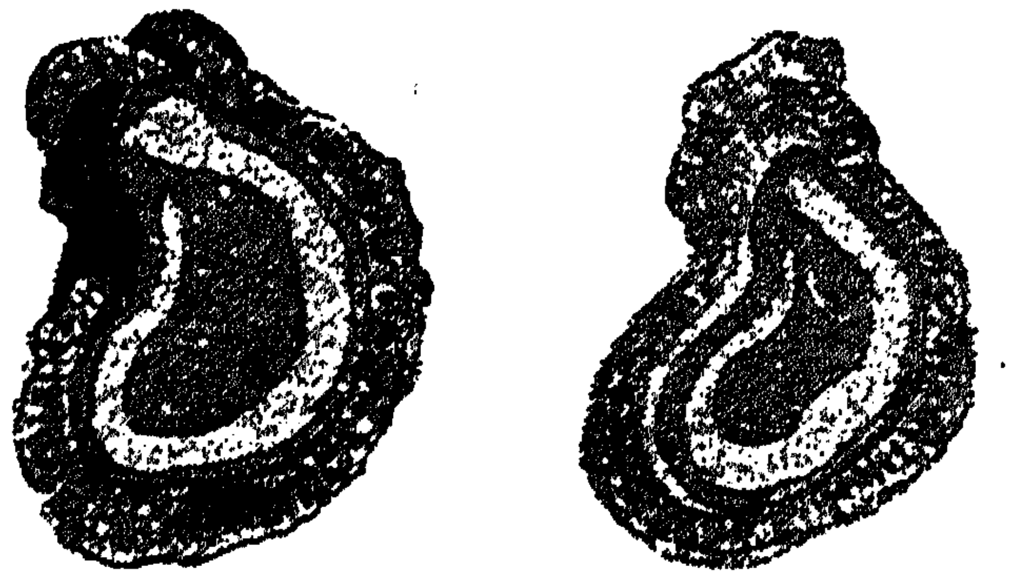

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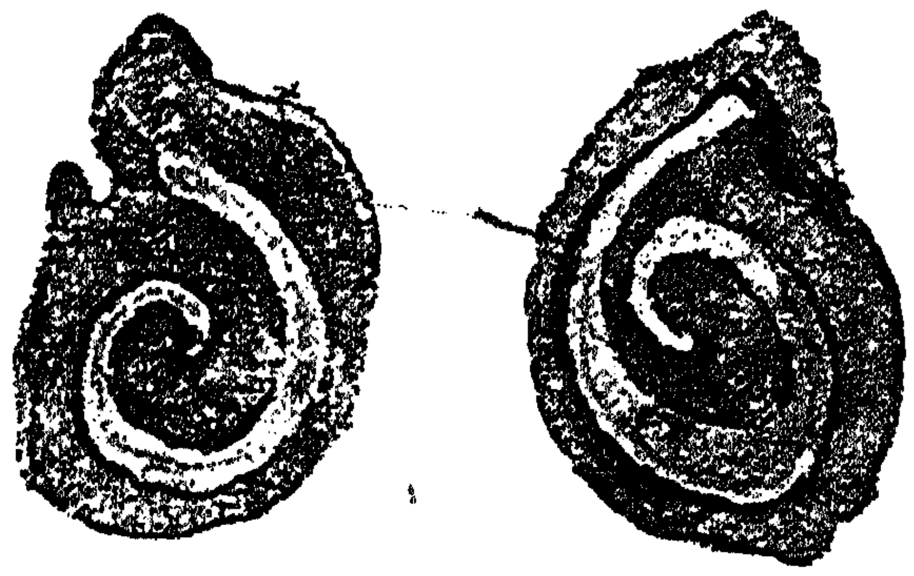

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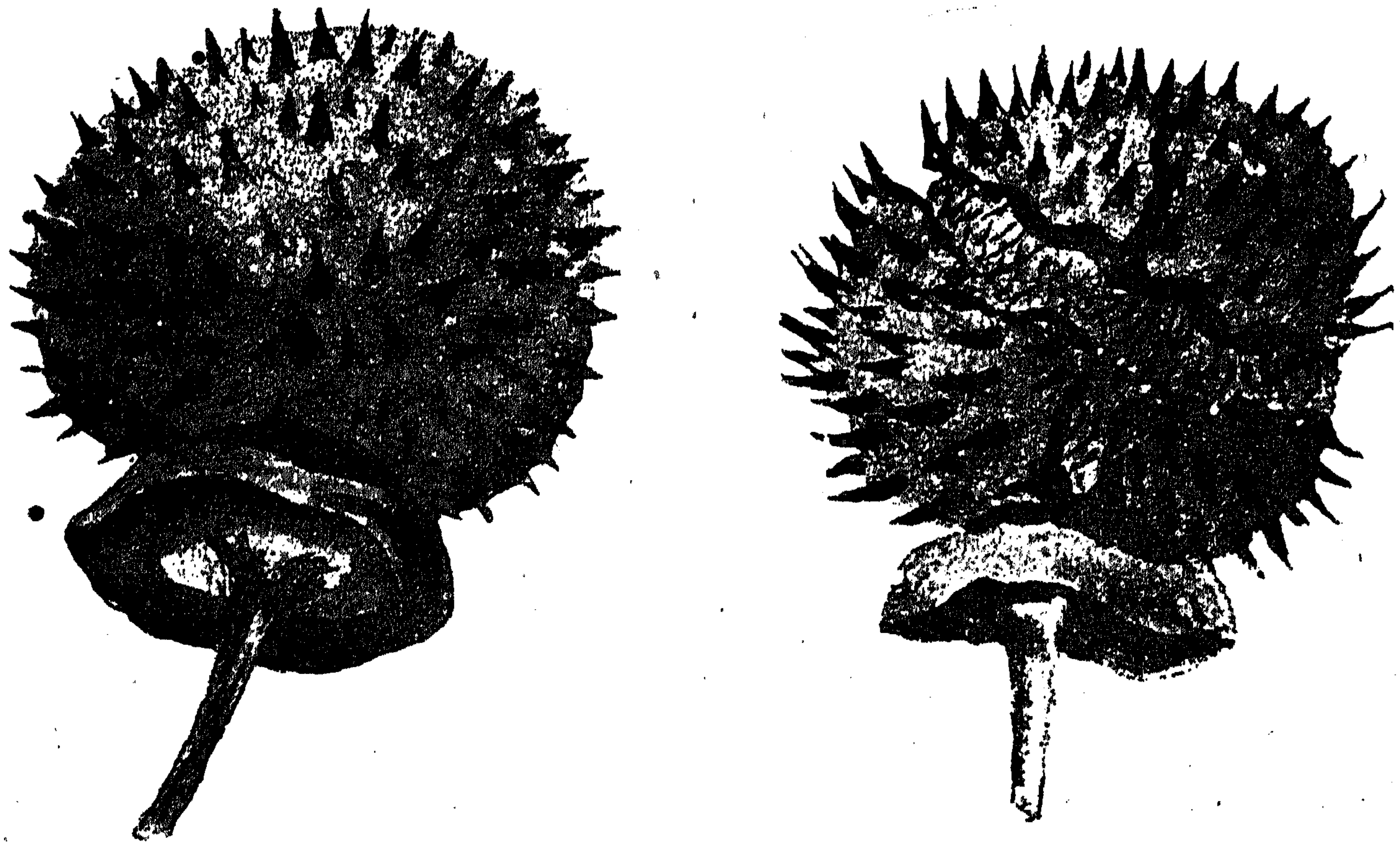

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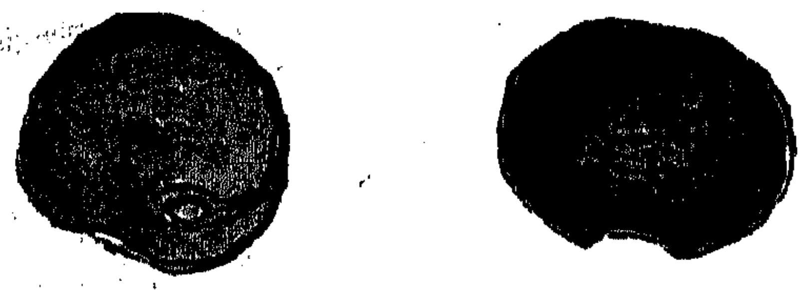

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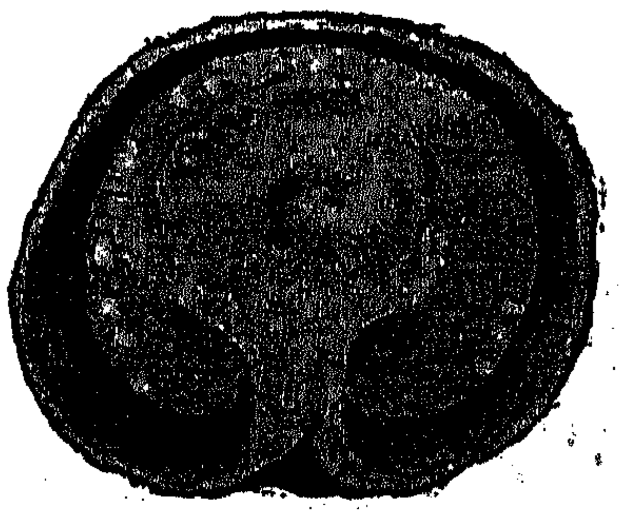

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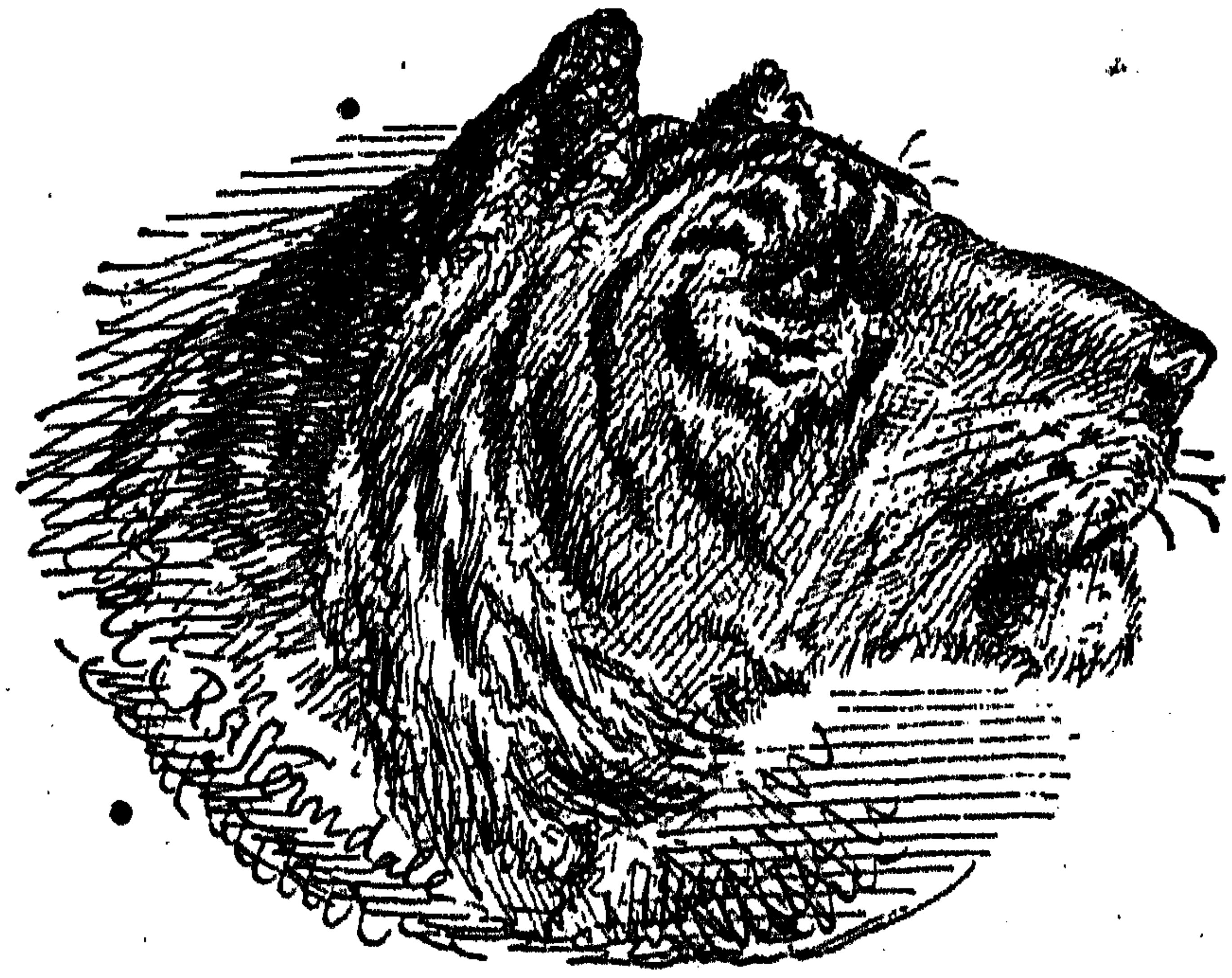

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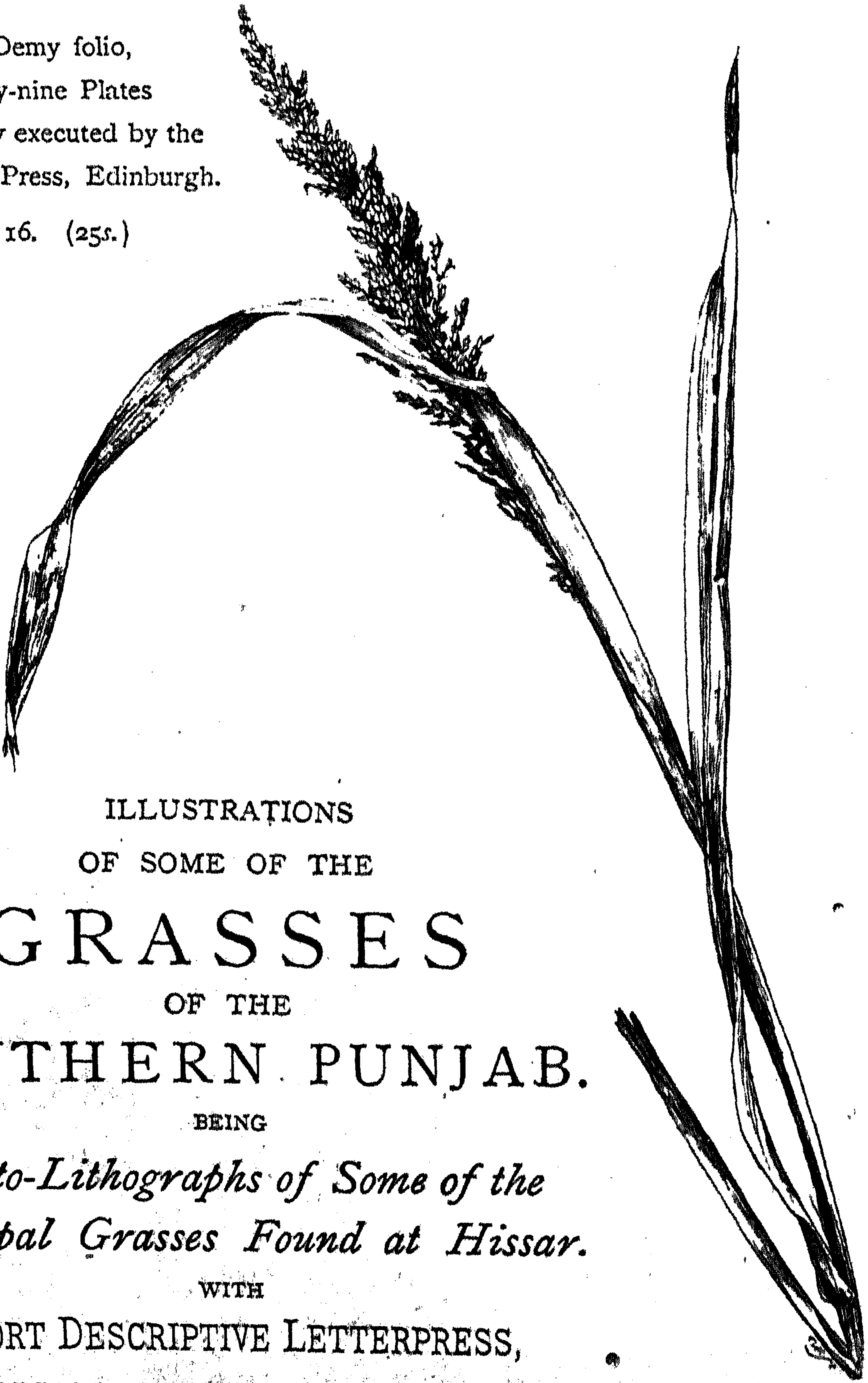

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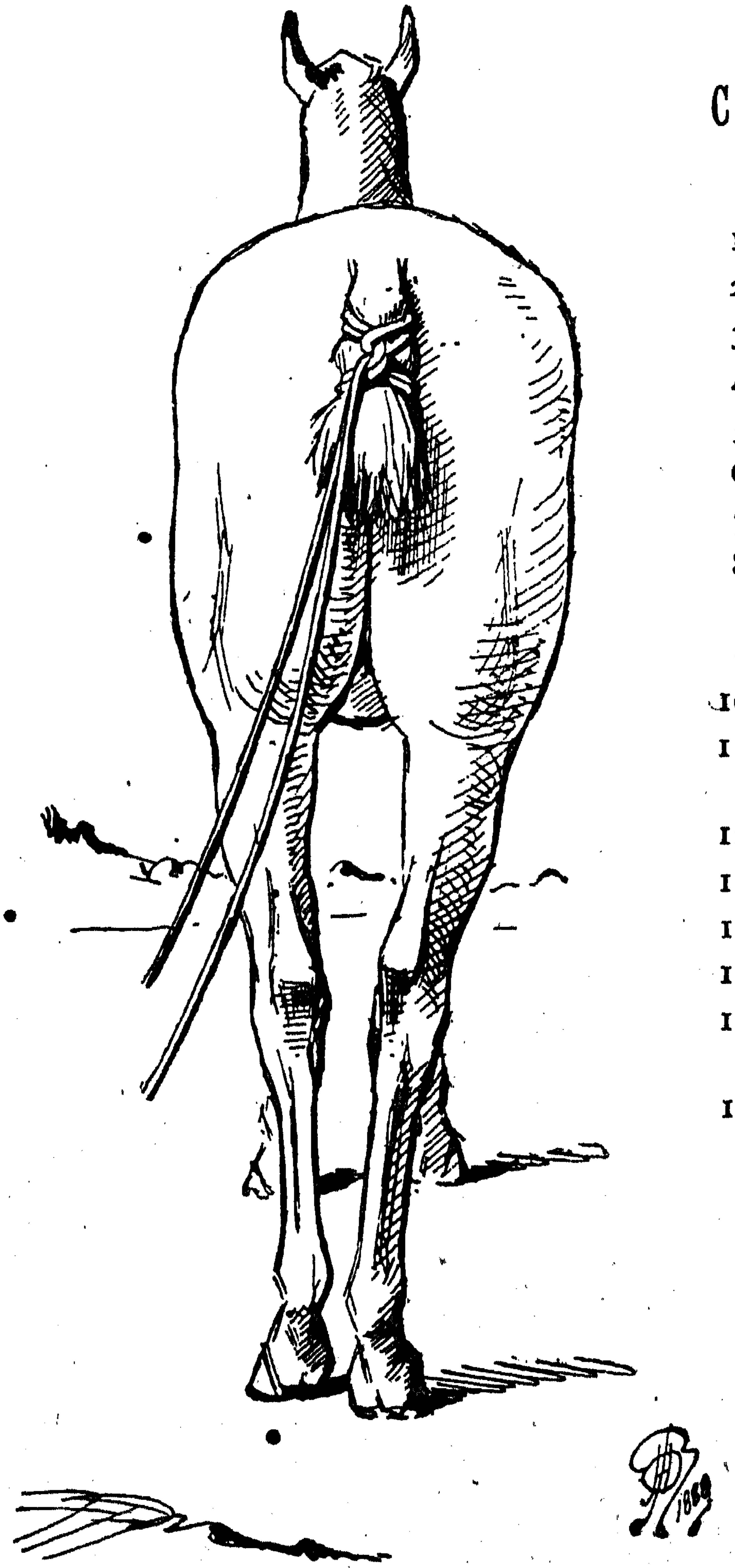

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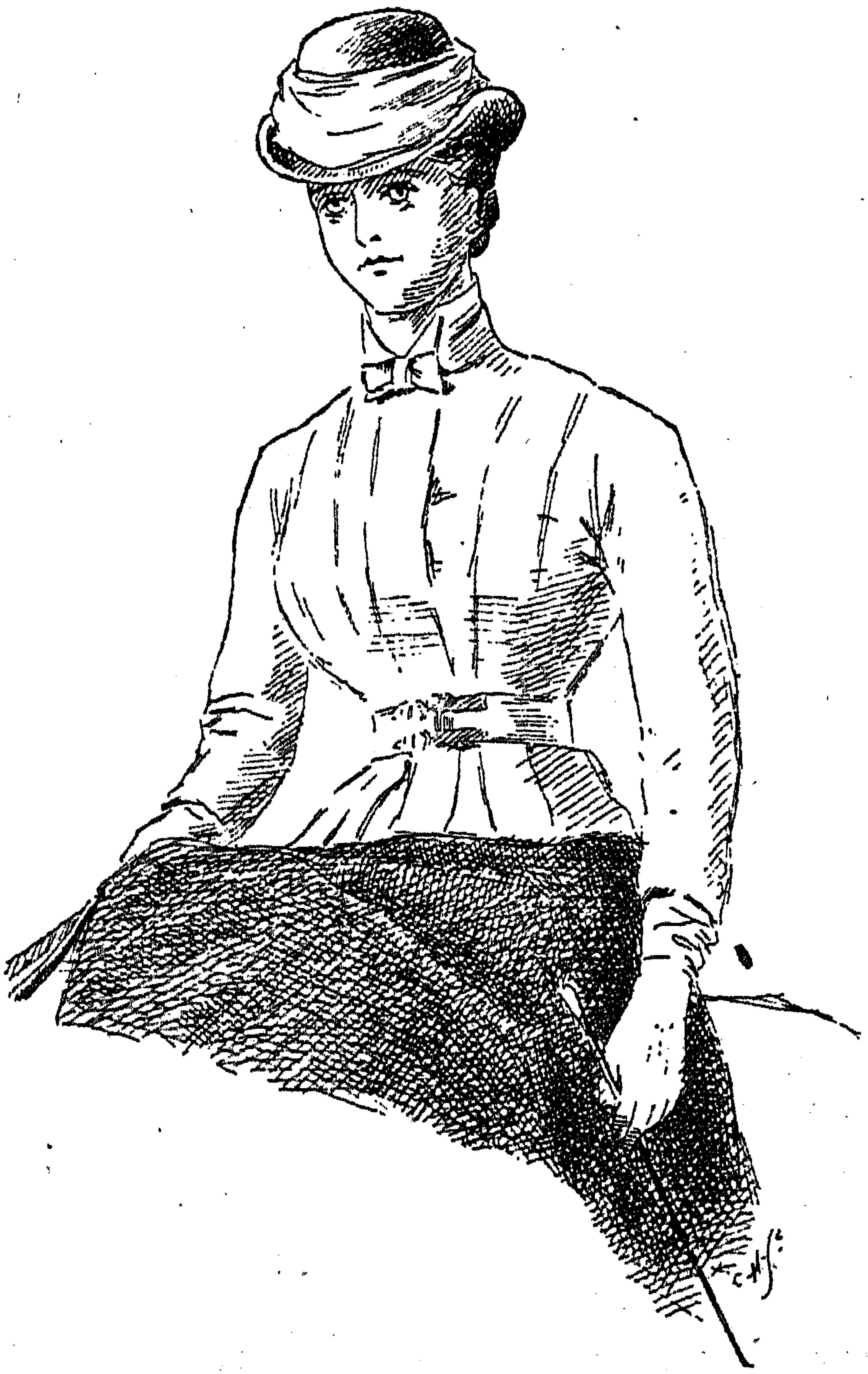

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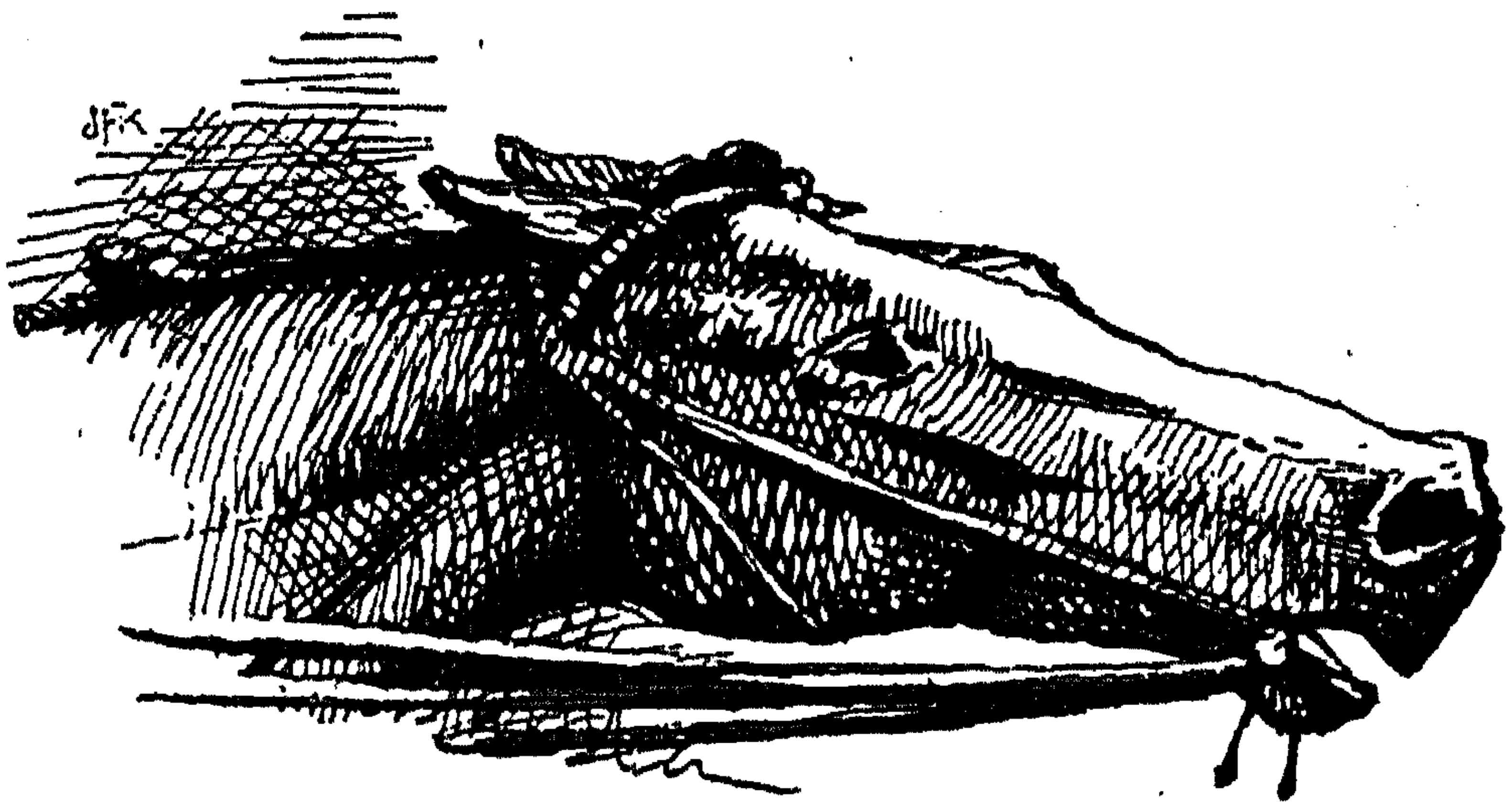

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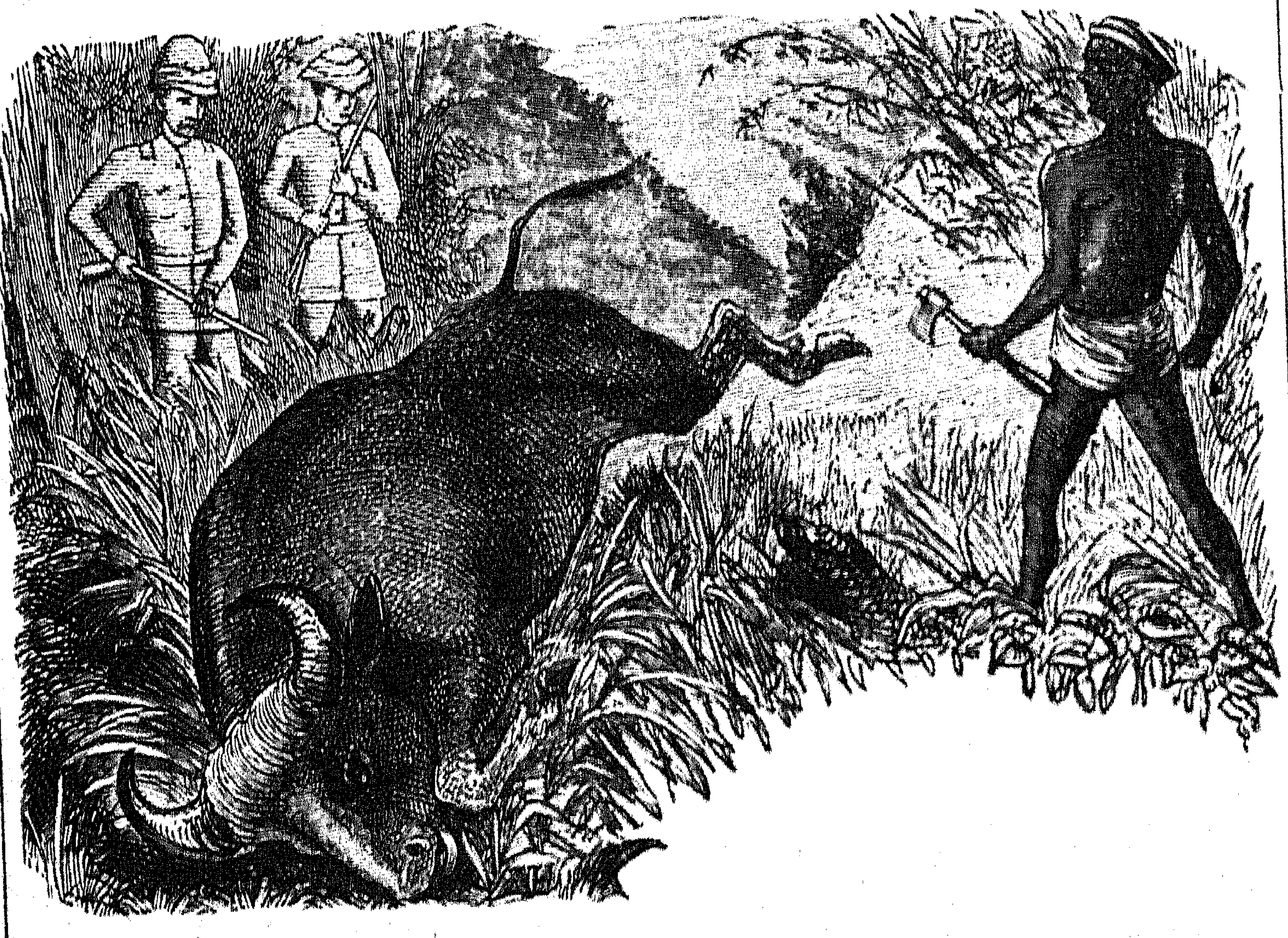

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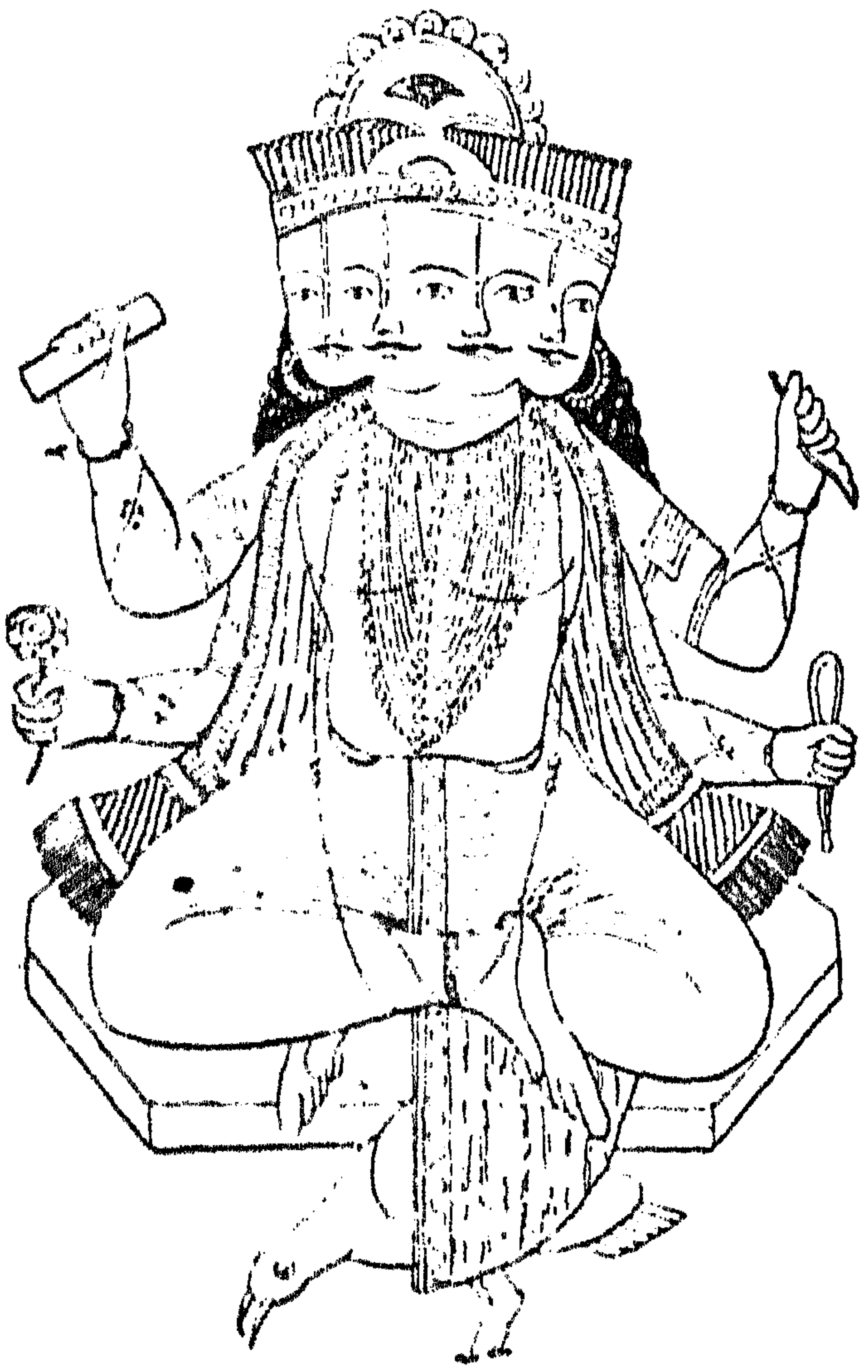

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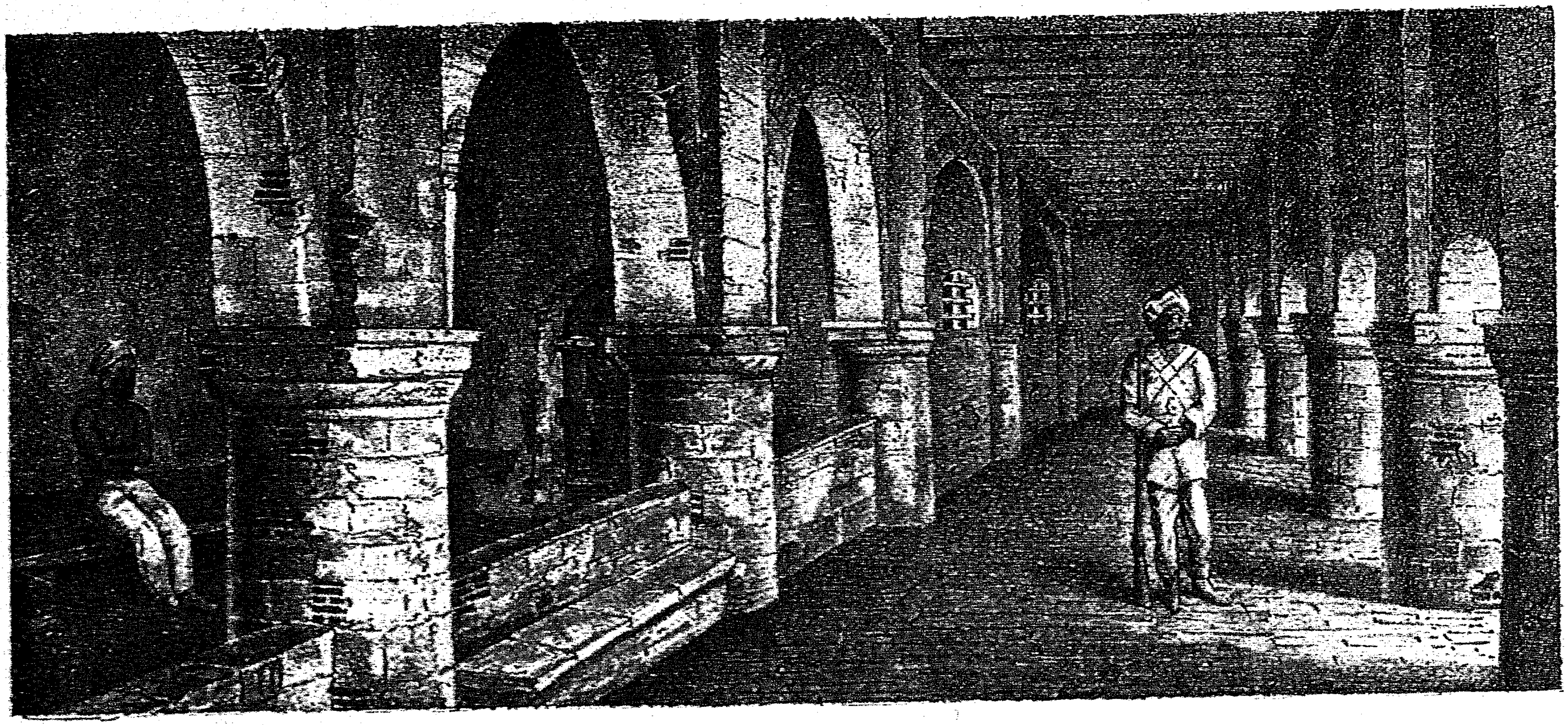

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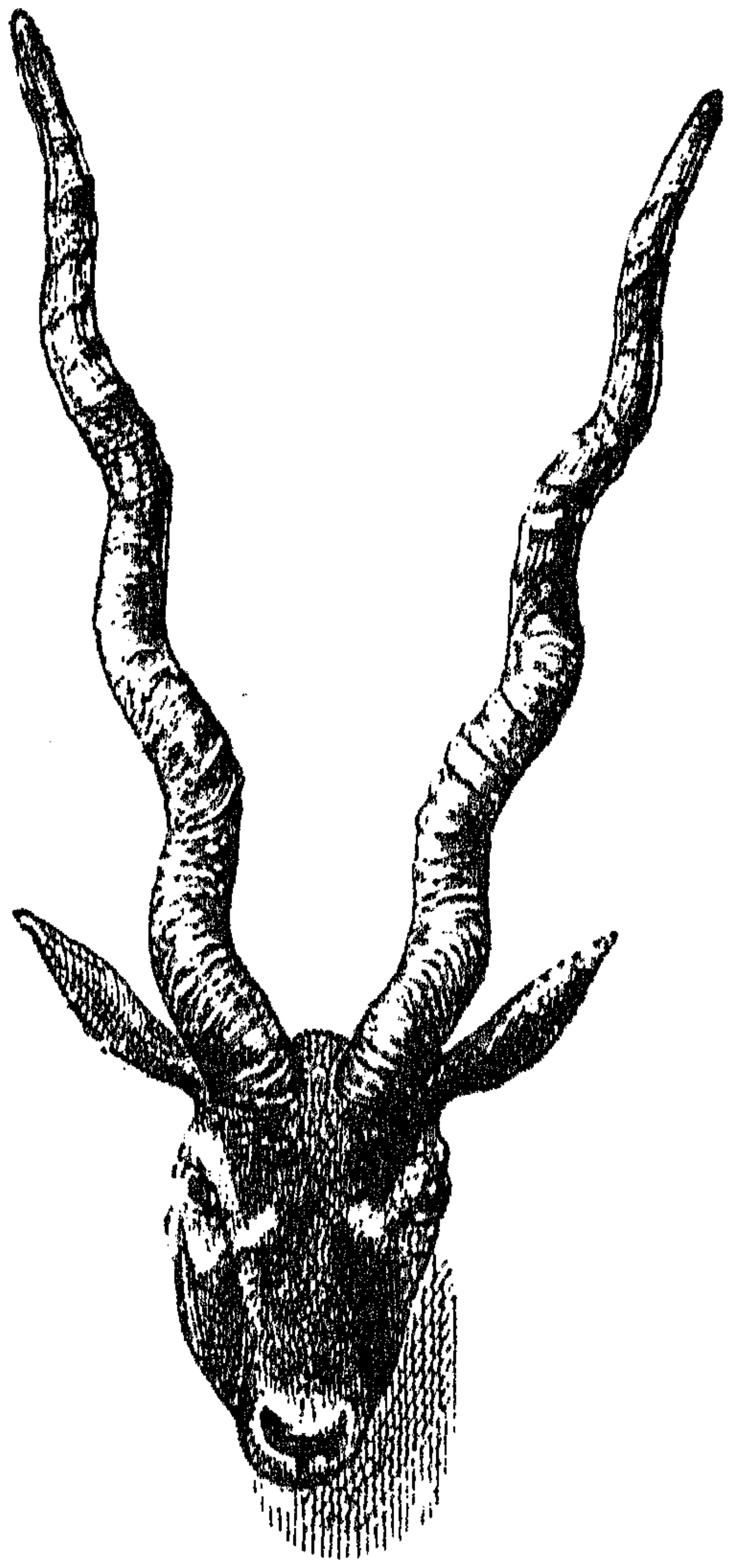

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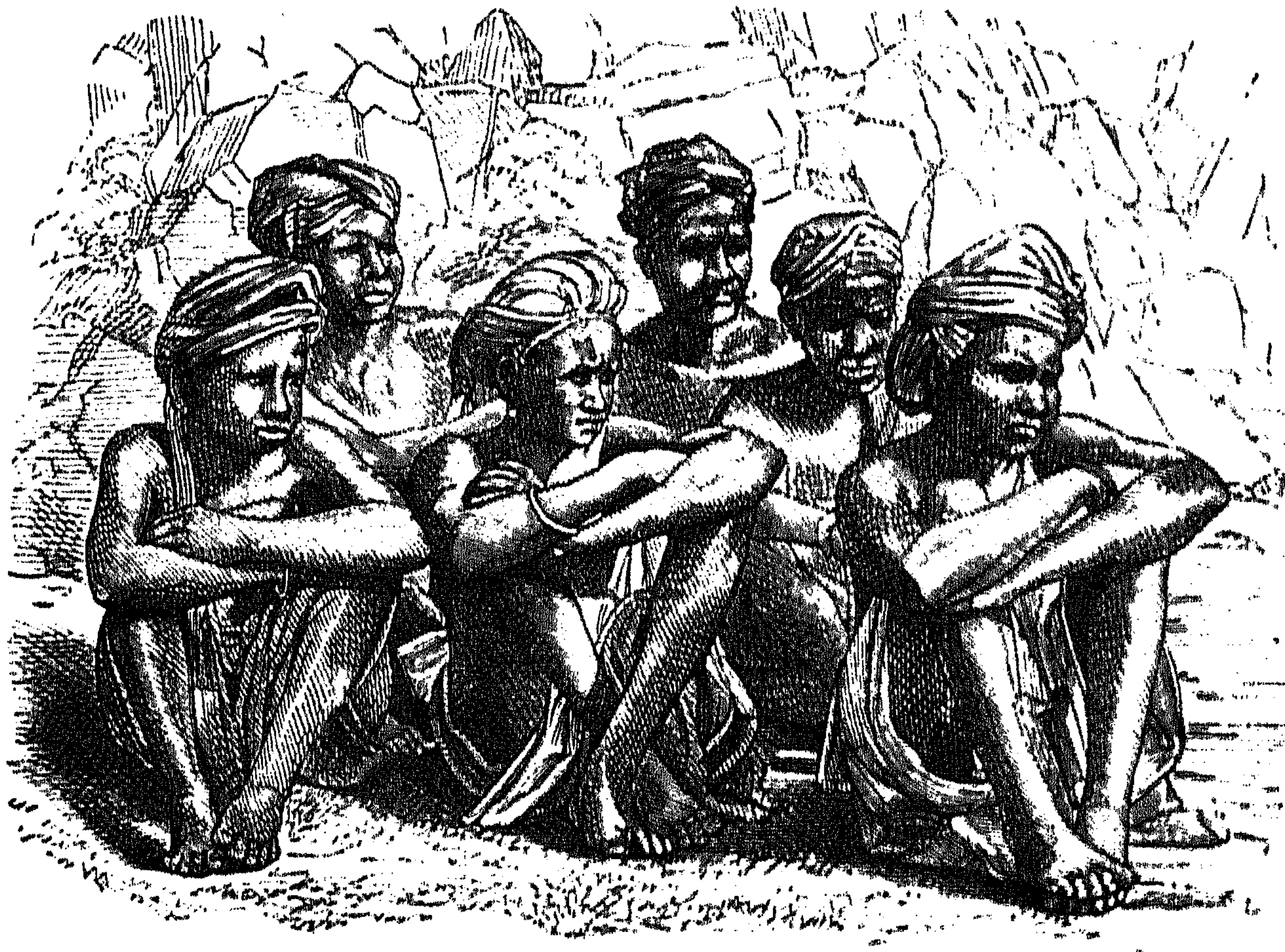

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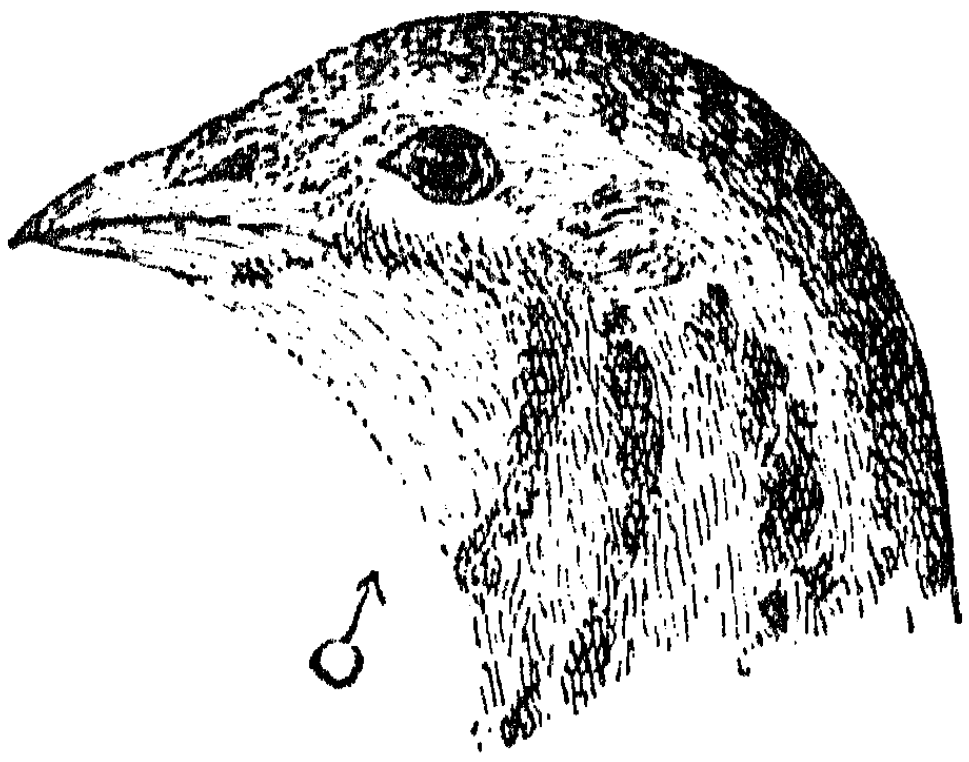

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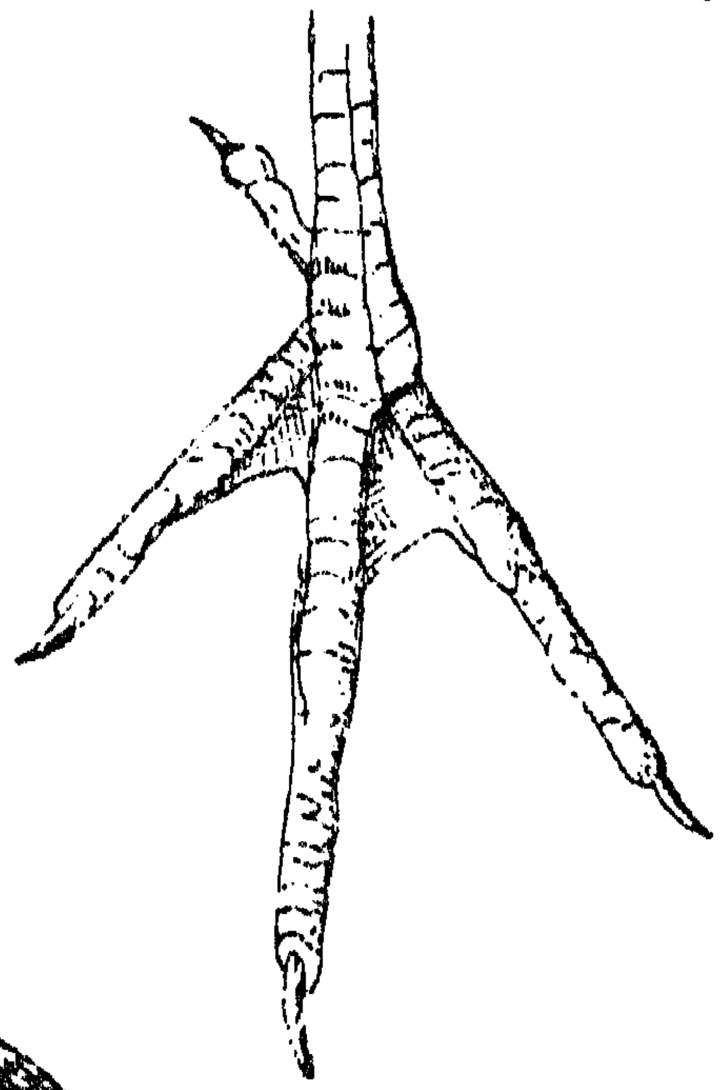

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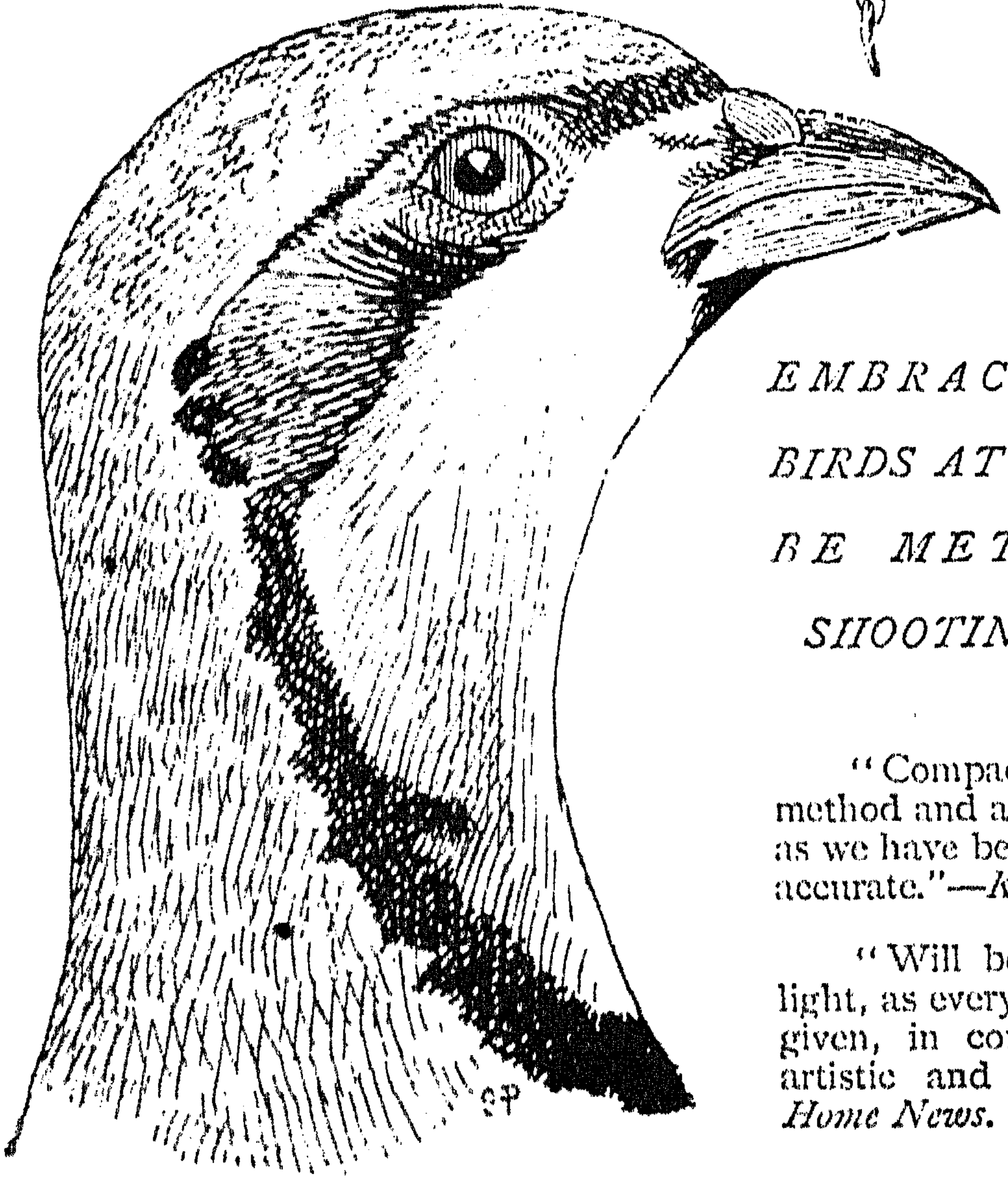

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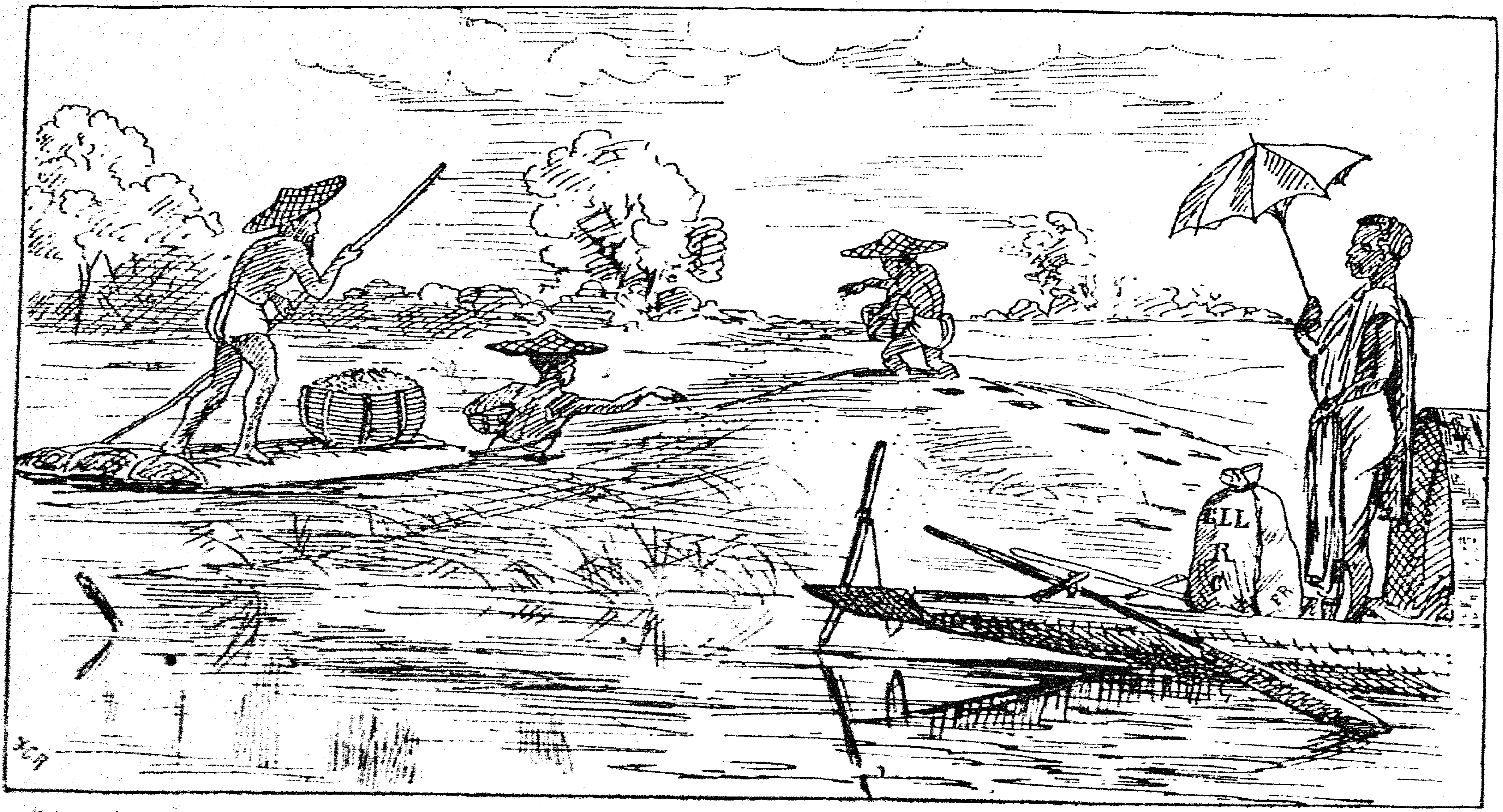

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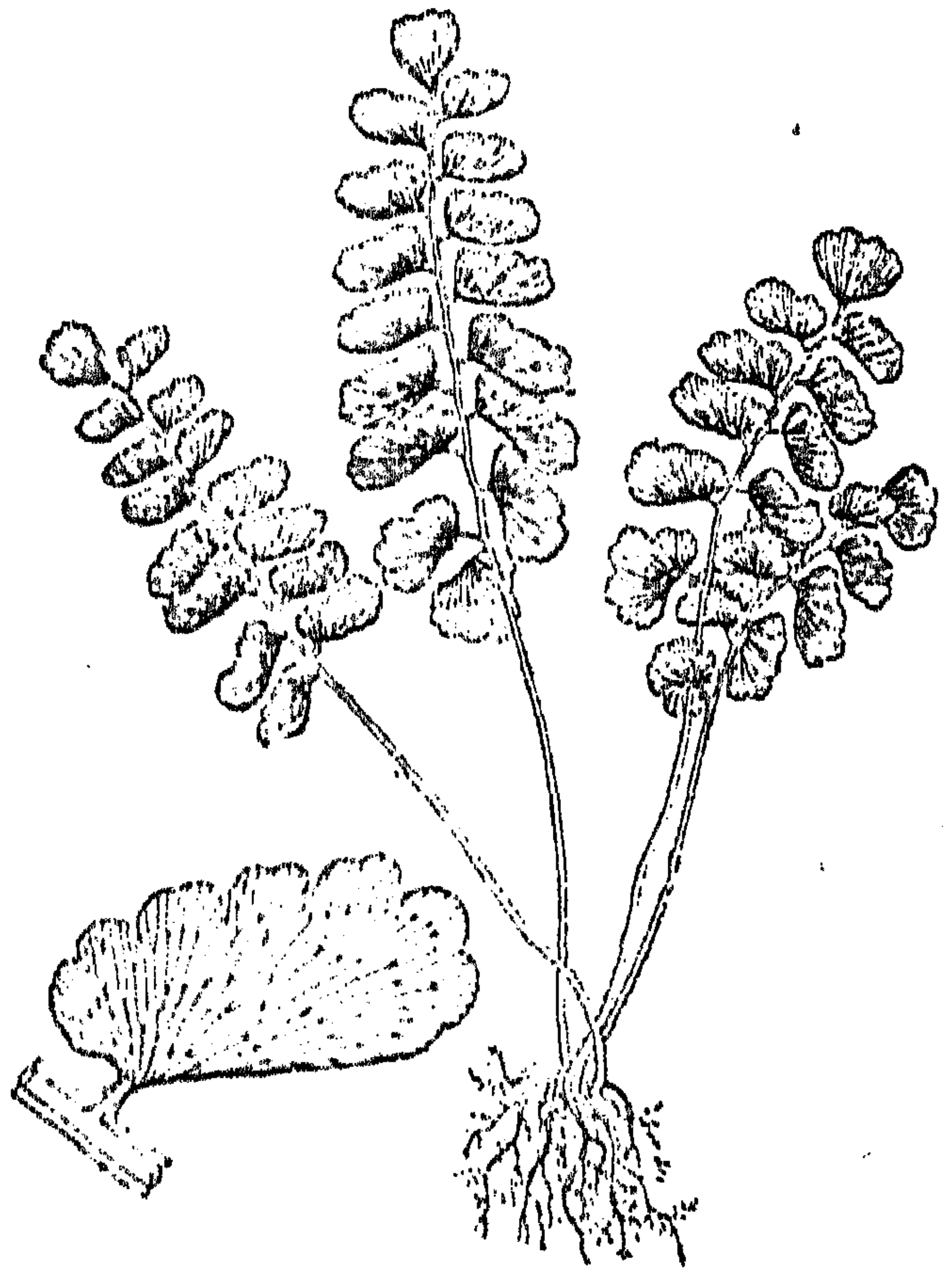

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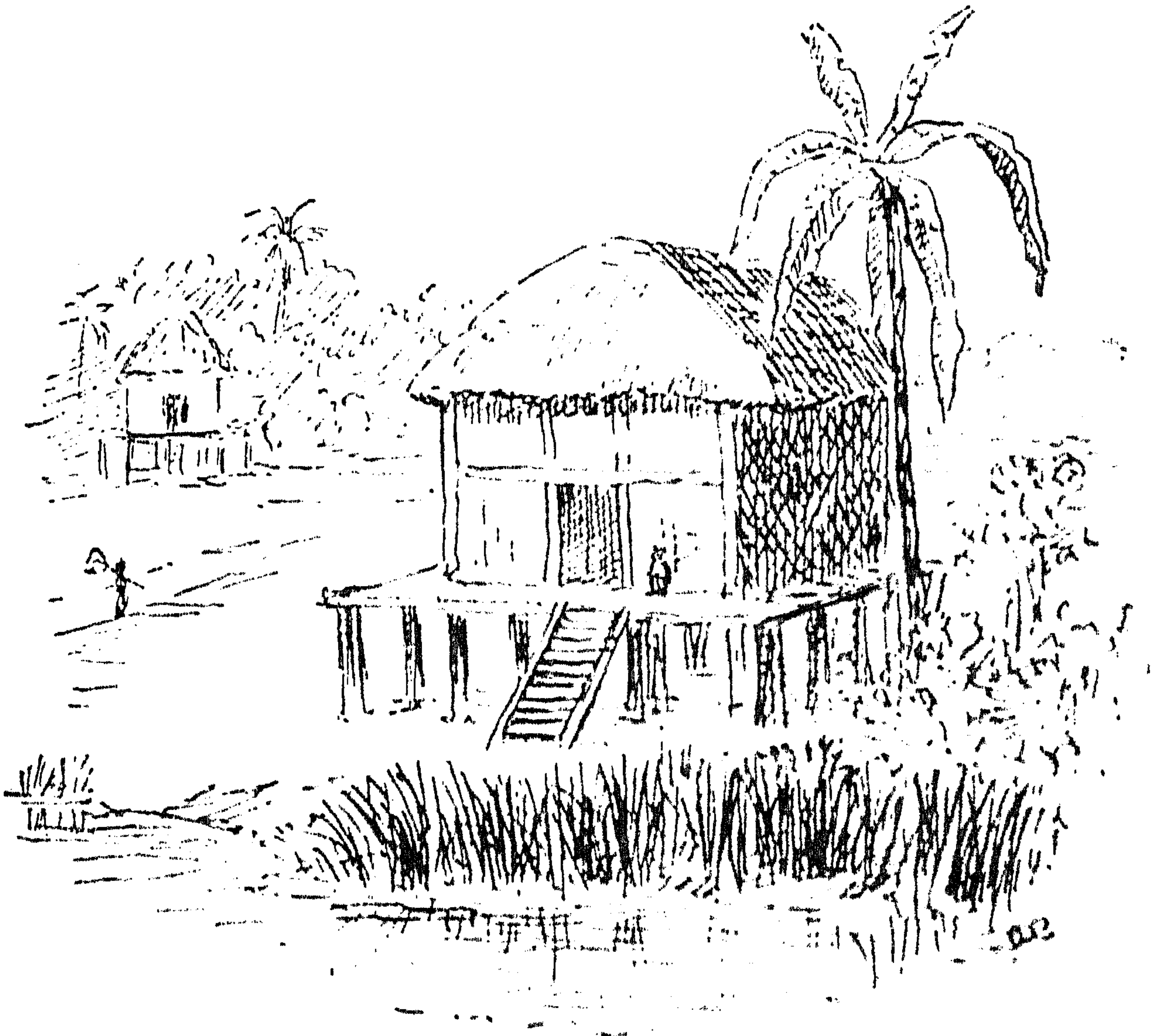

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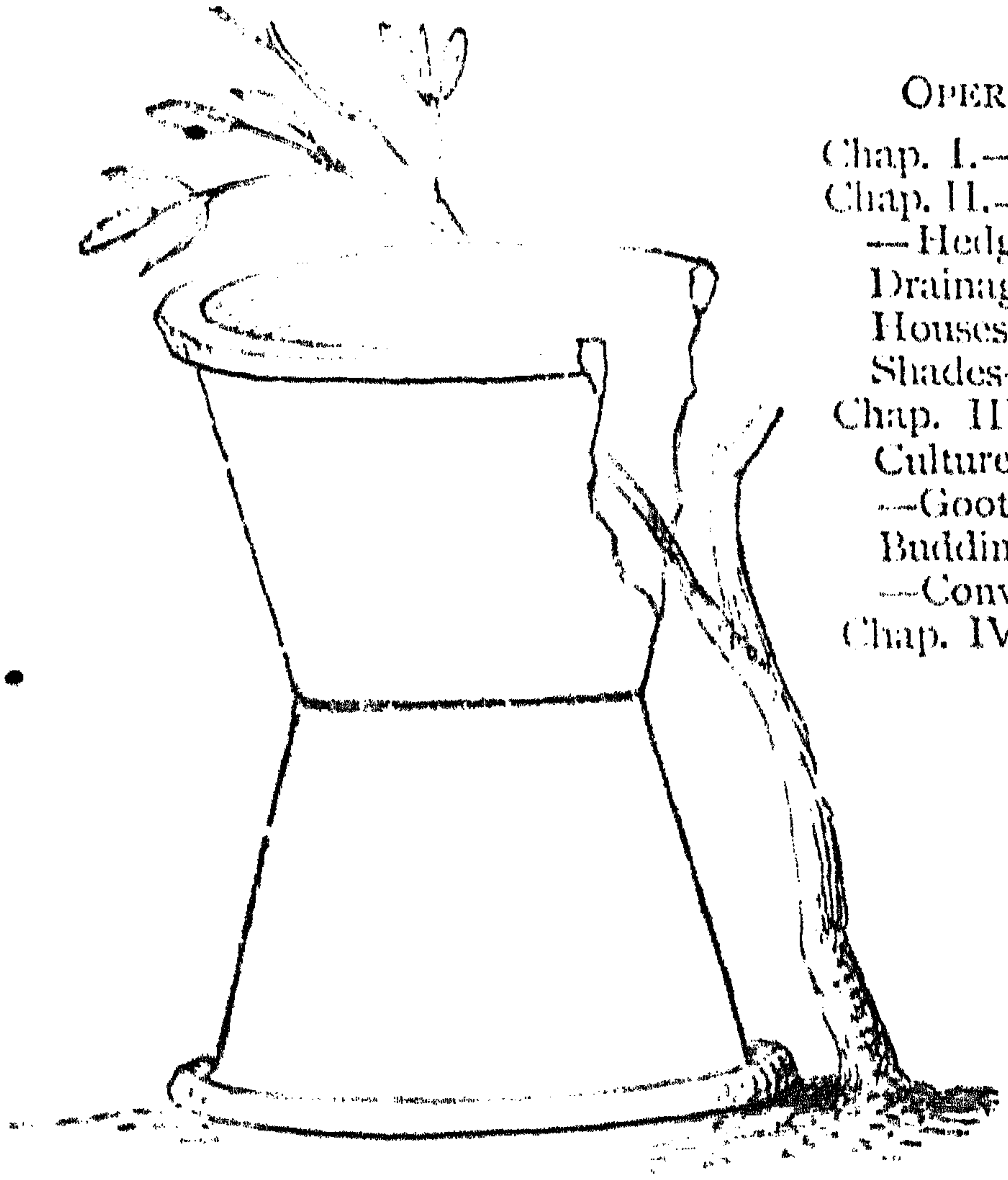

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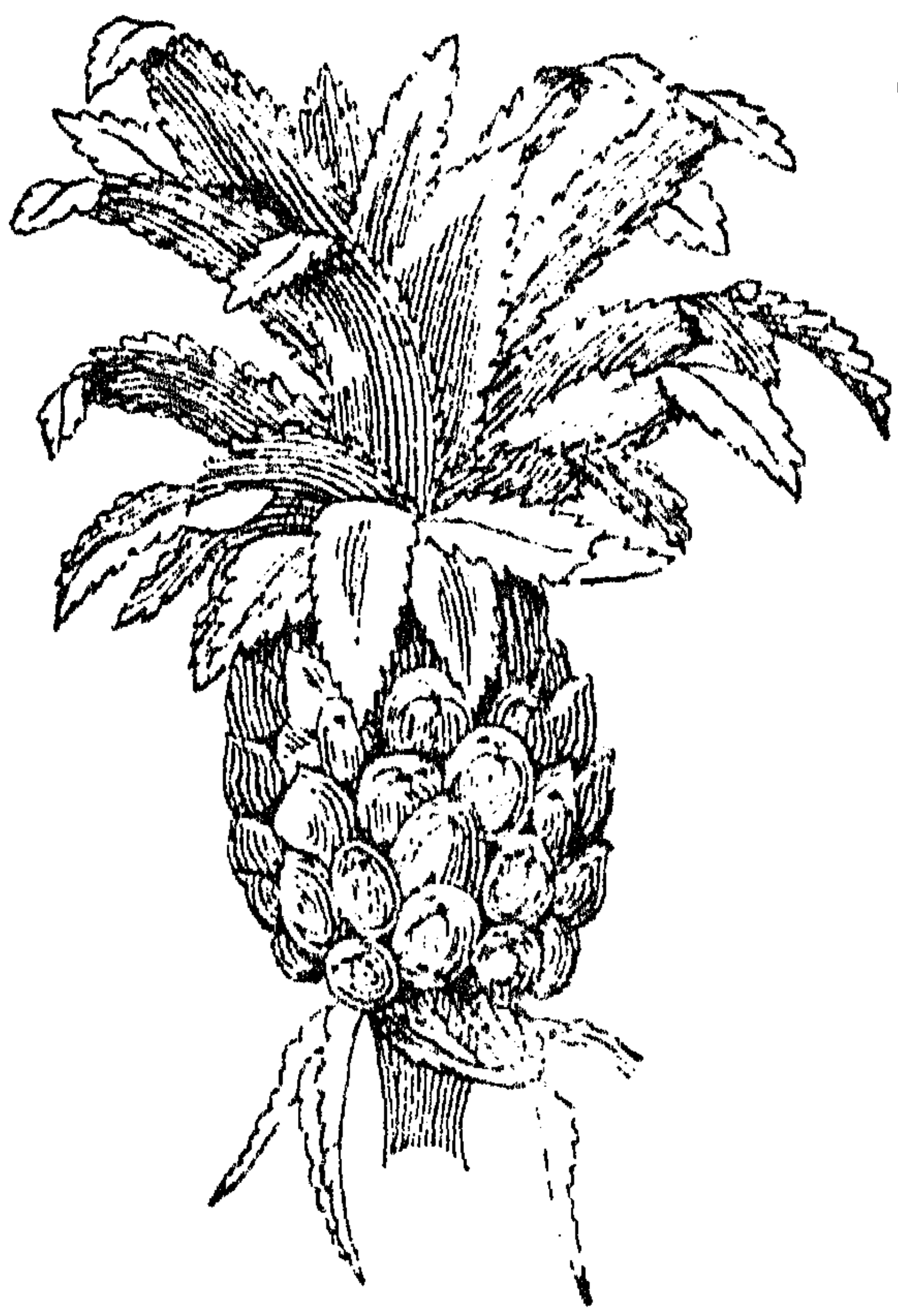

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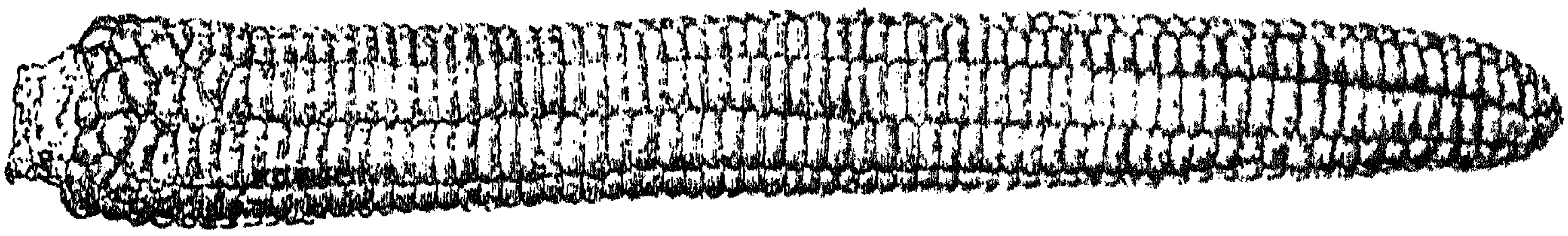

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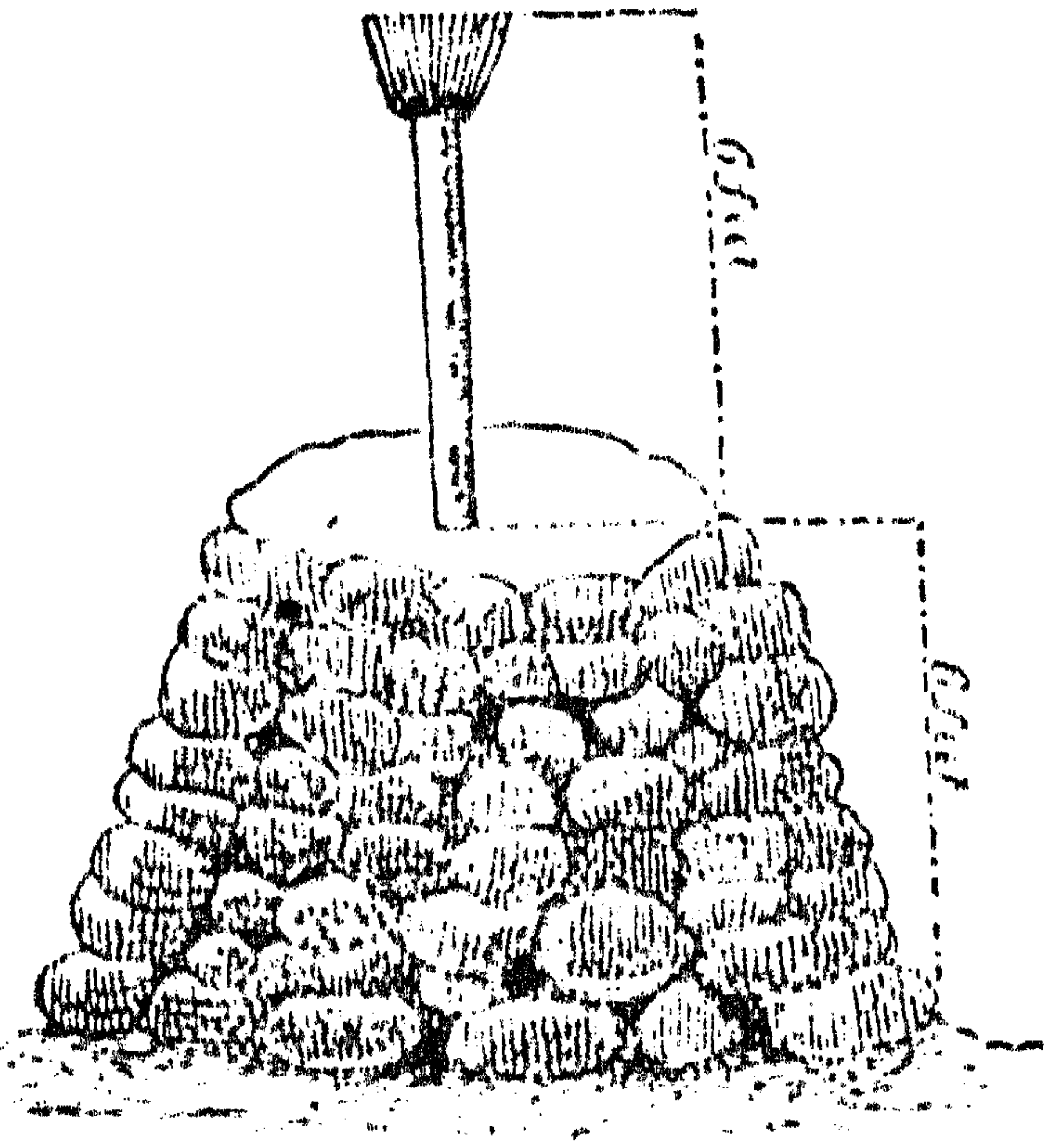

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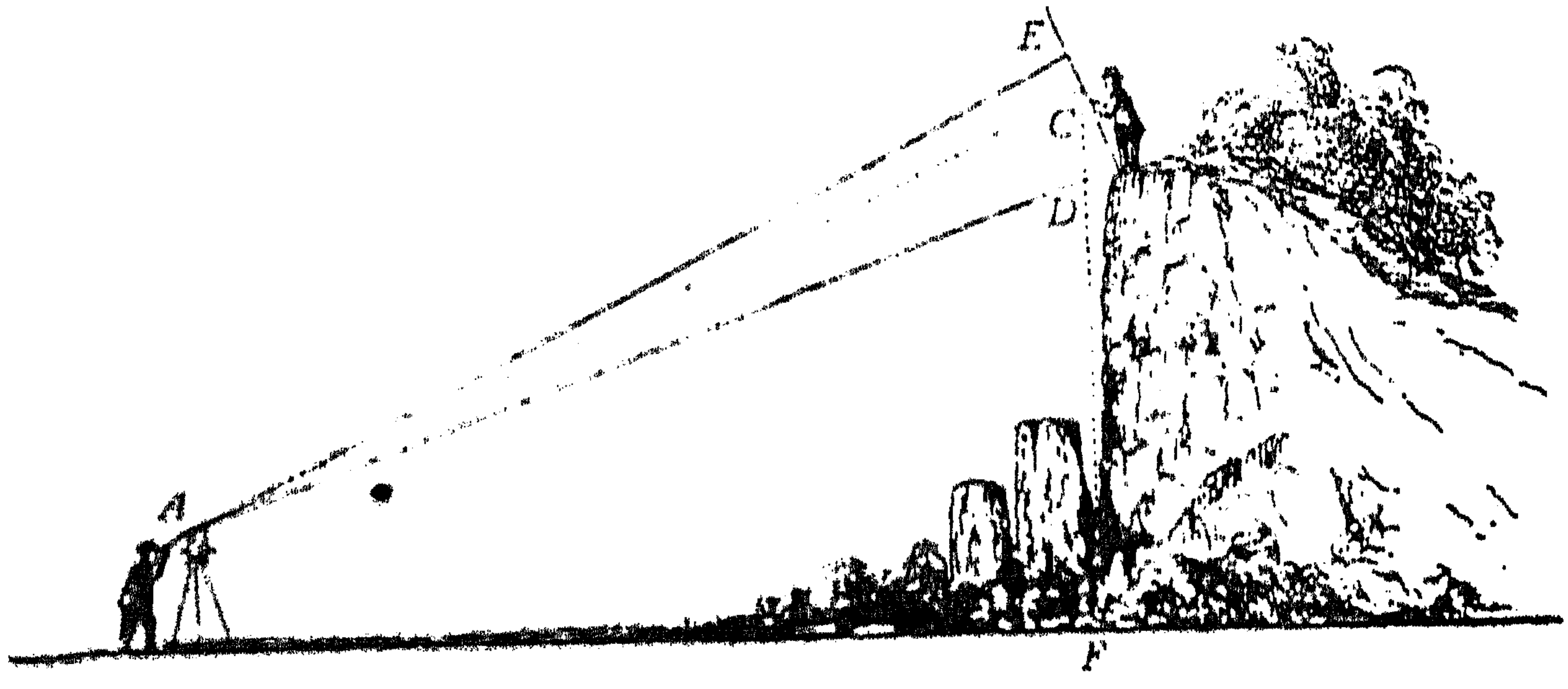

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